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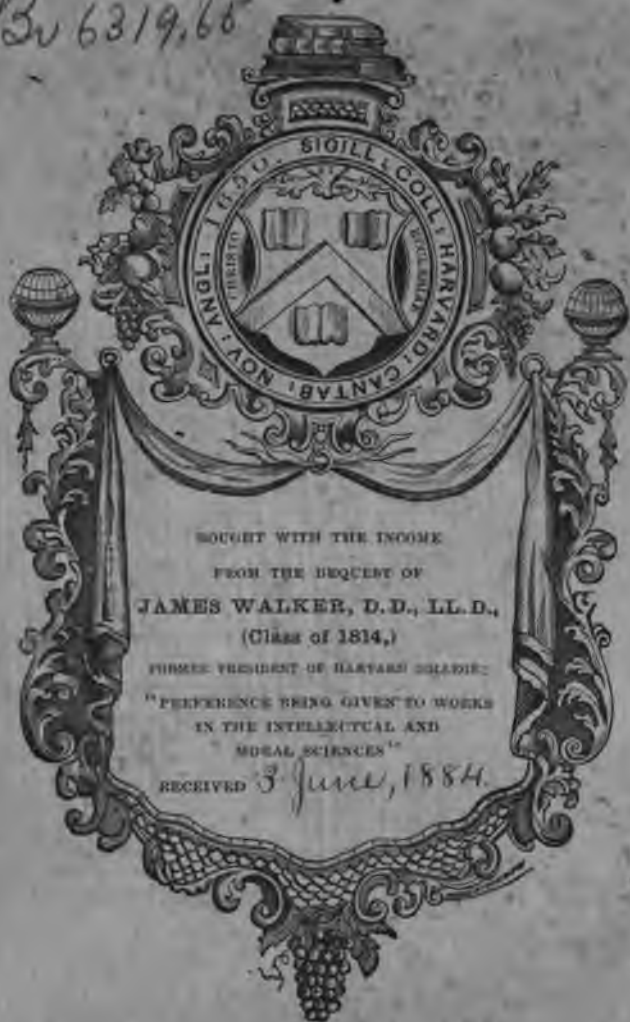
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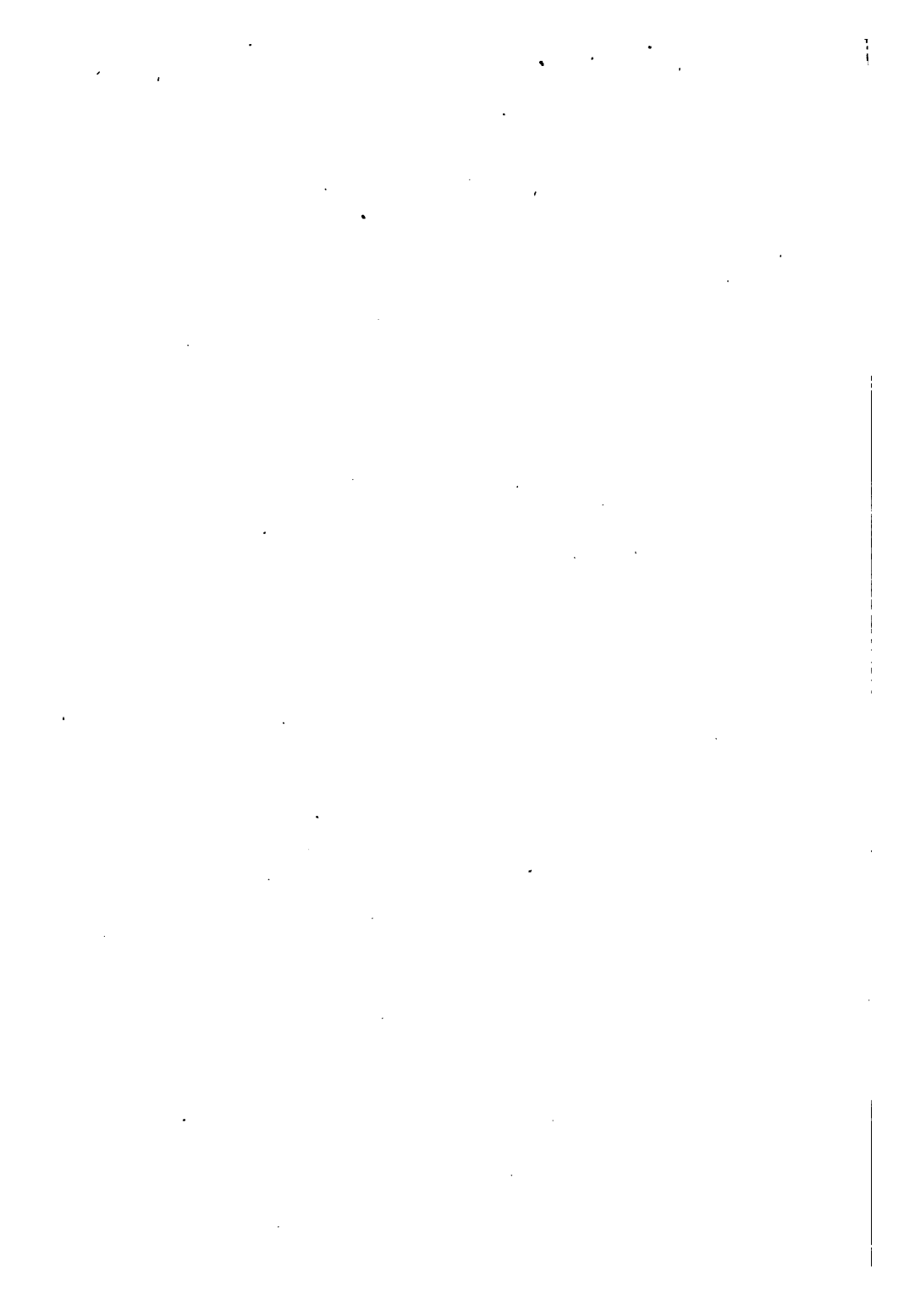
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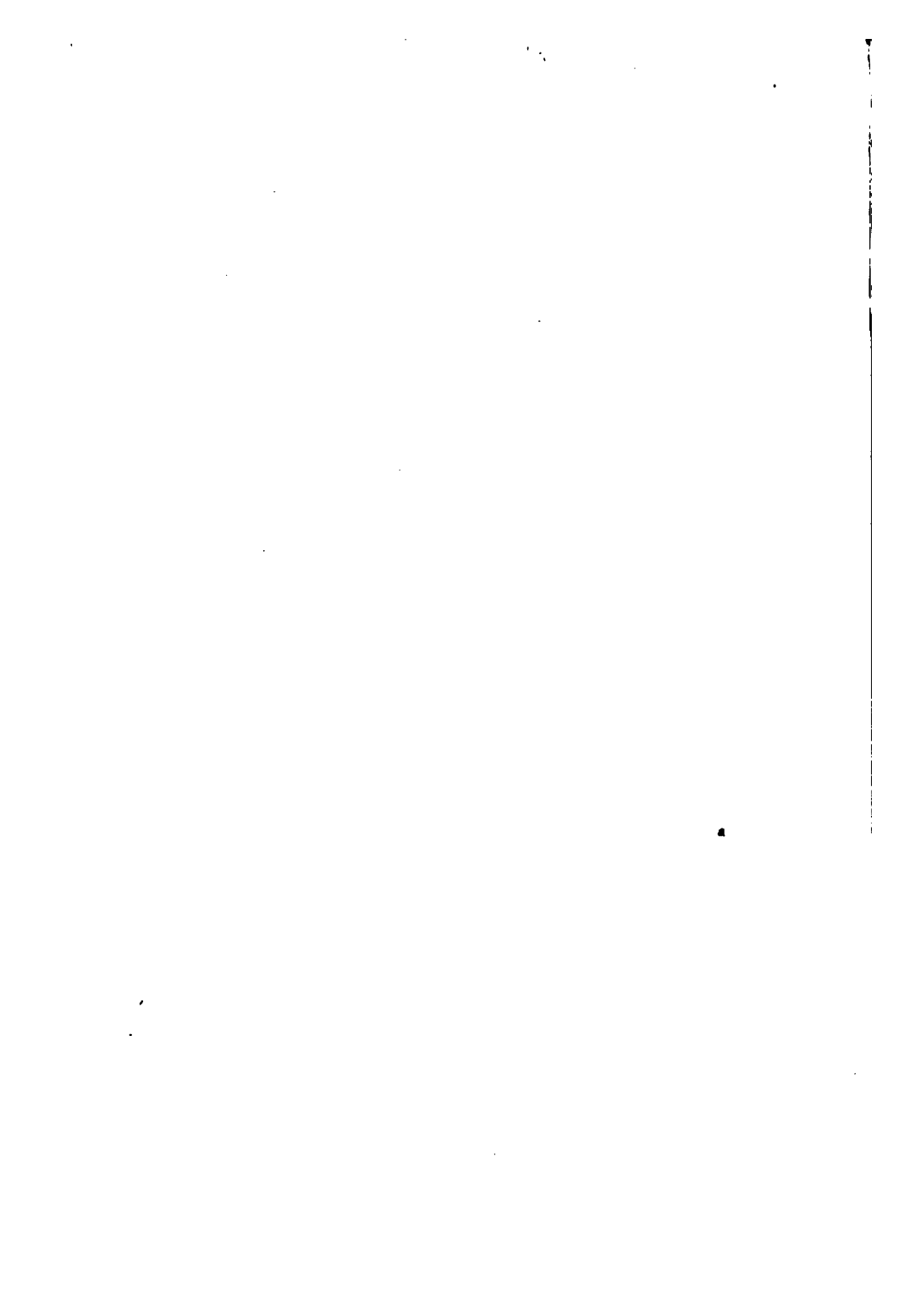
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JAMES SKINNER







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# JAMES SKINNER

## *A MEMOIR*

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"CHARLES LOWDER"

*Maria Trench*

WITH A PREFACE BY

THE REV. CANON CARTER

"Who best  
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best"



LONDON

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TO  
THE REV. WILLIAM HENRY CLEAVER,  
IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE  
OF HIS FATHER,  
AND OF  
THE GREATEST KINDNESS AND ASSISTANCE  
IN THE PREPARATION OF  
THIS MEMORIAL.

MENAGGIO, LAGO DI COMO,  
*St. Mark's Day, 1883.*



## PREFACE.

---

THE subject of this memoir was so long withdrawn from any active share in the Church's work, and forced, through continual sickness and suffering, to live for so many years in comparative retirement, often out of England, that it was at first a question whether there was a sufficient justification for writing his life, or sufficient material for its composition. The circle of his friends had necessarily become much narrowed, and to younger men the position he occupied in the progress of the Church movement was mostly unknown or forgotten.

But the work which James Skinner did before sickness incapacitated him, was of an important kind, and during his later years, confined almost to his study, he was yet never unoccupied, except when quite unequal to any exertion. Amidst his books—

he had a well-stocked and valuable library—he was continually at work, either preparing private help for those who looked to him for guidance in their spiritual difficulties, or materials of a theological or devotional kind, of more general usefulness, some of which have been published.

It was felt therefore that there was cause for requesting an intimate friend to undertake some personal record, that the lessons to be derived from his example and the fruits of his learning and mental powers, always bent on the furtherance of Divine truth and spiritual edification, might not be lost.

At first it was intended only to publish his letters and other spiritual papers, but afterwards it was thought best, and more interesting, to introduce them in a narrative.

I desire to offer very grateful thanks to those who, at my request, kindly entrusted to me the letters and certain other writings of my dear friend which they had treasured. These have been freely used according to their permission, where it was thought they might be useful to others. It should,

however, be clearly stated that the author herself is not responsible for the selections made. They have been carefully considered at her express and anxious desire, and a special debt is due to the Rev. W. H. Cleaver for his patient labour in this matter, as well as for his general assistance in the preparation of this volume.

There has been another feeling actuating the resolve to undertake this work. It was that the lesson of patient endurance under continual suffering and inaction, on the part of one who had been endowed with specially ardent and energetic activities of mind and body alike, might not be without some fruit in encouraging and solacing others called to a similar trial.

His nature was fitted and inclined to enter keenly into the stirring interests of any great cause or of lofty duty, and equally so to enjoy with intense brightness the innocent delights of the passing hour. His whole spirit within him would stir with enthusiasm, or indignation, or eager zeal, as the cause might dictate, and no one had a more joyous utterance or a heartier laugh, as his quick imagination

kindled in loving intercourse with others; for he had a special gift of genial fellowship, and more than ordinary conversational power.

It was felt, to use the author's words (in writing to me to express her own thoughts as to her work), that James Skinner's life had been "a victory mainly through suffering," as Charles Lowder's had been "a victory through self-denying action," and that this memoir, which her affectionate, reverent regard for my dear friend led her to undertake, would be a true practical comment on the words she has chosen for the motto of her book,

"Who best  
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best."

T. T. CARTER.

ST. JOHN'S LODGE, CLEWER,  
*September 8, 1883.*



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# JAMES SKINNER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS.

1818-1839.

*"Chacun des Saints est un mot d'un discours infini, une note d'une symphonie immense."*

THERE is a remarkable account in Cardinal Newman's "Apologia" of his ardent desire, in the spring of 1833, to return to England, after an absence of six months in Italy, and his conviction that he had a work to do in this country. After various hindrances from illness and other causes, he arrived, he tells us, on July 9th, the Tuesday before Mr. Keble preached the Assize Sermon in the University pulpit at Oxford, on that Sunday, July 14th, which Dr. Newman says he ever considered and kept as the start of the religious movement of 1833.

When I got home from abroad (he continues), I found that already a movement had commenced in opposition to the specific danger which at that time was threatening the religion of the

nation and its Church. Several zealous and able men had united their counsels, and were in correspondence with each other. The principal of these were Mr. Keble, Hurrell Froude, who had reached home long before me, Mr. William Palmer of Dublin and Worcester College, Mr. Arthur Perceval, and Mr. Hugh Rose.

Amongst these remarkable men, perhaps Mr. Hurrell Froude possessed the most original genius; certainly he was the one who felt himself the least fettered in his course of thought and action. Now that half a century has passed away, it is not unfitting that the following letter, written by him to Mr. Perceval, should be made public. It was written exactly a month after Mr. Keble preached the Oxford Assize Sermon, and is one of so much historical value that to withhold it would be a loss.\*

MY DEAR PERCEVAL,

The impression left on my mind after my visit to Rose was on the whole a gloomy one, *i.e.* that in the present state of the country we have very poor materials to work upon among the clergy and laity; and that the only thing to be done is to direct all our efforts to the dissemination of better principles.

Since I have been back at Oxford, Keble has been here, and he and Palmer and Newman have come to an agreement, that the points which ought to be put forward by us are the following:—

I. The Doctrine of the Apostolical Succession as a rule of practice.

*i.e.* (1) That the participation of the Body and Blood of Christ is essential to the maintenance of Christian life and hope in each individual.

(2) That it is conveyed to individual Christians *only* by the Hands of the Successors of the Apostles and their delegates.

\* It is given here by the kind permission of Miss Perceval, eldest daughter of the late Rev. and Hon. Arthur Perceval.

- (3) That the Successors of the Apostles are those who are descended in a direct line from them, by the imposition of Hands ; and that the delegates of these are the respective presbyters whom each has commissioned.

II. That it is sinful voluntarily to allow the interference of persons or bodies, not members of the Church, in matters spiritual.

III. That it is desirable to make the Church more popular as far as it is consistent with the maintenance of its apostolical character.

Newman and Palmer add, but Keble demurs :

IV. We protest against all efforts directed to the subversion of existing Institutions, or to the Separation of Church and State.

V. We think it a duty steadily to contemplate and provide for the contingency of such a separation.

Keble demurs to these, because he thinks the union of Church and State, as it is now understood, actually sinful. In the rest we agree.

VI. We hold it to be the duty of every clergyman to stir up his brother clergy to the consideration of these and similar subjects, and if possible to induce them to do the same.

If you object to any of these, or anything else strikes you of greater or equal importance, is it troubling you too much to ask that you will write to one of us ?

It is very important that we should all pull together, and preach the same thing ; at least, if our opinions ever make a noise it will be so.

So much for principles—next as to their application. Does any plan strike you on which we could organize arrangements for the wide publication of tracts on such subjects ?

Could we not, by means of our friends and our friends' friends, contrive railroads and canals for the diffusion of apostolical knowledge ?

We mean to have the Epistle of St. Ignatius printed very cheap ; perhaps on handbills with woodcuts of his martyrdom on

the top, and the parts about Bishops printed in capitals, perhaps in red letters. But this will be of little use if we cannot circulate them widely. As to the clergy, perhaps the *British Magazine* is the best way of getting at them.

But we may do much by writing on the subjects aforesaid to all our friends, insisting much on their importance, and getting them to do the same.

Such of us as know each other well and can be sure of never splitting on minor points, may perhaps form a joint stock company to supply means for printing tracts we approve on a large scale, but all this is for a much more advanced stage of our proceedings, only it is as well to keep it in view.

I shall leave Oxford next Friday, and shall be in Devonshire for the next month at Darlington, near Totnes, Devon; but you had best write, not to me but to Keble or Palmer, for whom I only officiate as an understrapper.

I am sorry to say I forget the watering-place you were going to, so I direct to your Parsonage.

Yours very truly,  
R. H. FROUDE.

Oriel College, August 14, 1833.

Palmer has, I believe, written to Rbse, and we shall of course be much guided by his advice.

To the Hon. and Rev. A. P. Perceval,  
East Horsley Rectory, Surrey.

"A bold rider, as on horseback, so also in his speculations," this letter proves to have been a true saying of Froude, who had, indeed, "that strong hold of first principles, and that keen perception of their value, that he was comparatively indifferent to the revolutionary action which would attend on their application to a given state of things." \*

\* "Apologia pro Vita sua," p. 106. 1864.



The history of the movement which he evidently expected would "make a noise" remains to be written. We can but gather up a few records of those who took a part in it, more or less prominent; believing that it will not be without profit to tell the story of men inspired and working with a fresh keen ardour for principles which they had accepted with all the strength of their being.

Dr. Newman's words concerning Mr. Froude, quoted above, may be truly said of the subject of this memoir. But in considering his life and his work there is this drawback, that the task has fallen upon one who, in attempting to fulfil it, can only tell the story of a friend. Yet it may be that love unseals our eyes more than it blinds them, permitting us to behold, even here, that vision of inward beauty which in eternity will be fully unveiled.

"Clear stands Love's perfect image now,  
And shall do evermore,  
And we in awe and wonder bow  
The glorified before.

---

James Skinner was born at Forfar, in Scotland, June 23, 1818, the youngest of ten children. He came of a family remarkable both for ability and for devotion to the Church. His great-grandfather, the Rev. John Skinner, born in 1721, had been brought up in Presbyterian principles, but while still a lad his poems in the Scottish dialect attracted the attention of Lady Grant of Monymusk, near Aberdeen, who, in the words of a memoir prefixed to his works,

was pleased to encourage his rustic muse, by affording him in

the house of Monymusk every accommodation for prosecuting his studies, and improving his mind in the attainment of useful learning. Here it was that, enjoying the conversation and the benefit of reading under the direction of a worthy clergyman in that neighbourhood, he became a convert to the principles of Episcopacy, and united himself to the venerable remains of the old-established Church of Scotland.

He married the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Hunter, the only clergyman of the Episcopal communion in the Shetland Isles, "whose unwearied assiduity in discharging the duties of his office, often at imminent risk of his life in those boisterous seas, endeared him to the people under his pastoral charge, and made his memory precious among them."

Mr. Skinner received holy orders from Bishop Dunbar, and was placed in charge of the Episcopal congregation at Longside, near Peterhead, to whom he ministered for sixty-five years. It was a time of trial to his steadfast principles, for, in the words of his biographer,

after the last Stuart rising in 1745, the Scotch Episcopal Church was doomed to feel, as a community, not only the rigour of the law, but some of the most cruel effects of military violence. Their chapels, or meeting-houses, were either burnt to the ground, or otherwise demolished by parties of armed men sent through the country for that purpose; and many of the clergy were obliged to leave their houses, under the terror of immediate imprisonment if found at home; nay, to leave them to the mercy of plundering soldiers, out of the reach of discipline, or acting under the command of officers of the lowest rank, eager, by the strict execution of this barbarous service, to raise themselves in the esteem of some furious and enraged superior.

Such was the state of things through the North of Scotland in

the summer of 1746, during which the Episcopal clergy could hardly find a home or place of safety; and poor Mr. Skinner was for the most part a prisoner, either in custody or on his parole, uncertain how or when he might be called to undergo some heavier punishment. The writer of this memoir has often heard him tell that, on coming home one evening from performing an occasional office in the way of his duty, he found his house in the possession of a military party, some of them guarding a door with fixed bayonets, and others searching the several apartments, even the bedchamber where Mrs. Skinner was lying-in of her fifth child, and little able to bear such a rude, unseasonable visit. No lenity was to be looked for from such unfeeling visitors, who pillaged the house of everything they could carry with them, hardly leaving a change of linen to father, mother, or child in the family. The chapel with all its furniture was destroyed, and for several years the congregation could find no place to meet in for public worship but the clergyman's house, which not being sufficiently large, many of them were obliged to stand in the open air during divine service.

In 1746 and 1748 (says a writer in the "Encyclopædia Britannica") two laws were enacted against the Scotch Episcopalians, which, under the pretence of eradicating their attachment to the house of Stuart, were so contrived as to preclude such of their clergy as were willing to pay allegiance to the reigning sovereign, and to pray for the royal family by name, from reaping the smallest benefit from their loyalty.

Under these Acts Mr. Skinner was very unexpectedly apprehended in 1753, and being not willing to give the court any trouble in calling evidence to prove his having been guilty of the offence with which he was charged, he "emitted before the sheriff a voluntary confession, acknowledging that, in the discharge of his professional duty, he had been in the practice of officiating as a clergyman to

more than four persons besides his own family." In consequence of this confession, he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

His "Verses in the Scottish Dialect" are full of true poetical genius. Robert Burns, in his "Strictures on Scottish Songs and Ballads," says—

This first of Songs (*Tullochgorum*) is the masterpiece of my old friend Skinner. He was passing the day at the town of Ellon in a friend's house, whose name was Montgomery. Mrs. Montgomery observing *en passant* that the beautiful Reel of *Tullochgorum* wanted words, she begged them of Mr. Skinner, who gratified her wishes, and the wishes of every lover of Scottish song, in this most excellent ballad.

In 1787 Burns made a tour in the north and west of Scotland, and by chance met Mr. Skinner's son at Aberdeen, who wrote the following account of their meeting to his father :—

Calling at the printing-office the other day, whom should I meet on the stair but the famous Burns, the Ayrshire Bard ! And on Mr. Chalmers telling him that I was the son of *Tullochgorum*, there was no help but I must step into the inn hard by, and drink a glass with him and the printer. Our time was short, as he was just setting off for the south, and his companion hurrying him ; but we had fifty "auld sangs" through hand, and spent an hour or so most agreeably. "Did not your father write the '*Ewie wi' the crooked horn*' ?" "Yes." "O, an I had the lown that did it !" said he, in a rapture of praise ; "but tell him how I love and esteem and venerate his truly Scottish muse." On my mentioning *his* "*Ewie*" and how you were delighted with it, he said it was all owing to yours, which had started the thought. He had been at Gordon Castle and come by Peterhead. "Then," said I, "you were within four Scottish miles of *Tullochgorum's* dwelling." Had you seen the look he gave, and how expressive of vexation,—had

he been your own son, you could not have wished a better proof of affection.

A few days later, Burns writes to Mr. Skinner :

I regret, and while I live shall regret, that when I was in the North, I had not the pleasure of paying a younger brother's dutiful respect to the Author of the best Scotch song ever Scotland saw—"Tullochgorum's my delight !" The world may think slightly of the craft of song-making if they please, but, as Job says, "O ! that mine adversary had written a book !" let them try.

One extract from Mr. Skinner's answer to Burns must be given ; the letter is dated November 14, 1787 :

While I was young I dabbled a good deal in these things ; but on getting the black gown, I gave it pretty much over, till my daughters grew up, who being all tolerably good singers, plagued me for words to some of their favourite tunes, and so extorted those effusions which have made a public appearance beyond my expectations, and contrary to my intentions ; at the same time that I hope there is nothing to be found in them uncharacteristic, or unbecoming the cloth, which I would always wish to see respected. . . . Meantime, while you are thus publicly, I may say, employed, do not sheath your own proper and piercing weapon. From what I have seen of yours already, I am inclined to hope for much good. One lesson of virtue and morality delivered in your amusing style, and from such as you, will operate more than dozens would do from such as me, who shall be told it is our employment, and be never more minded ; whereas, from a pen like yours, as being one of the many, what comes will be admired, admiration will produce regard, and regard will leave an impression, especially when *example goes along*.

"Now binna saying I'm ill bred,  
Else by my troth I'll no be glad !  
For cadgers, ye have heard it said,  
An' sic like fry,  
Maun ay be harling in their trade,  
An' so maun I."

Wishing you, from my poet-pen, all success, and in my other character, all happiness and heavenly direction, I remain with esteem,

Your sincere friend,

JOHN SKINNER.

The venerable priest lived to see his son Primus of the Scotch Church. He writes to him, with a trembling hand, on May 25, 1807, accepting a pressing invitation to spend his last days in the Bishop's house at Aberdeen :

I cordially embrace your proposal, and am making ready to be with you, God willing, next week. By that time you will have got your Forfar friends about you, and I wish much to share in that pleasure and see once more my children's grandchildren and peace upon Israel. So God grant us a happy meeting even here, and at last a still more happy meeting in Abraham's bosom hereafter.

The inscription on his monument, in the churchyard of Longside, notes that "on the 16th day of June, 1807, aged 86 years, he slept the sleep of death, in the arms of the Right Rev. John Skinner, Bishop of the Diocese of Aberdeen, his only surviving son."

Bishop Skinner had two sons, who both entered holy orders : William, who was also Primus of Scotland and Bishop of Aberdeen from his father's death in 1816 to 1857, and John, Dean of Dunkeld and Dumblane, and Priest of St. John's Church, Forfar. He married, in 1798, Elizabeth, daughter of Provost Ure of Forfar. She died of consumption in 1820, two years after the birth of her youngest child James, and in 1822 Dean Skinner married Innes, daughter of John Duff, Esq., of Dundee, who, childless herself, became the most devoted of mothers to her step-children. But her

heart went out in an especial manner to the youngest, a delicate fragile child, inheriting, it was feared, his mother's disease, and he clung to her in return with the most ardent affection. Under her care he struggled through the delicacy of his early years, and at ten years old was sent to school, first in Aberdeen. In 1832 he went to Marischall College, in the same city, and in 1833 to Durham University, when only fifteen. Archdeacon Wright, Rector of Greatham, Petersfield, his great friend at Durham, gives the following account of those early days :—

James Skinner was admitted a Foundation scholar when the Durham University was first opened. He was very young—I believe he had not attained his sixteenth year—but he had the appearance of a youth of twenty, was bright and cheerful, and soon became a general favourite. Although physically far from strong, he was mentally far beyond his years, but from want of good training was, on starting, deficient in accurate scholarship. He had evidently lived in an atmosphere of high intelligence and theological learning, and had heard much of Church matters and the opinions of sound divines. This gave him a marked advantage over his fellows, and enabled him always to take a good place in any divinity class ; indeed, his papers in that direction were strikingly able, and surprised the tutors of the University not a little.

The habits of James Skinner were at first in no way studious—I might say quite the reverse. He would, when necessary, read closely for the Debating Society, in which his powers as a speaker soon became notorious. Possessed of a discerning mind and great command of language, he had qualifications to render him an orator of no mean kind. His speeches were so powerful, and his manner so quiet and self-possessed, that few believed him to be a youth of sixteen. In after years this gift was very telling at public meetings and in the pulpit. Strange to say, at a very early period of his priestly career, he seemed to avoid as far as

possible any gatherings which would call forth his oratorical powers.

Of his very early education I know nothing, but feel sure that he never had the advantage of public school instruction. His abilities, I have already said, were of a high order, but had never been carefully cultivated ; and when he entered Durham University, a mere boy in years, the amusements and pleasures offered by a large circle of generous friends in and around the old city interfered much with anything like close study. Dinners, dances, picnics, and archery meetings were constantly tempting the young student, and certainly no one more enjoyed and, in his way, more adorned society than my dear friend. A Scotch reel was his delight, and loud and hearty were his shouts when revelling in a Highland fling. Good spirits, a strong sense of the ludicrous, a warm and loving heart, an able brain, with a thoroughly honest learning, combined to make him a favourite everywhere.

Towards the close of every term he became alive to his neglect of study, and proved what might have been achieved by his high intelligence had he been consistently persevering. About a fortnight before the examination the door of Skinner's room was locked ; no one could get admission ; every hour was given up to the closest application, so that he might make up as far as possible for the time which had been devoted to amusements. When the lists came out his name always occupied a respectable place.

After residing two years at Durham, I went up to Cambridge, and so for a season lost sight of my friend. He afterwards told me that it was then he began to feel seriously that he had wasted much valuable time, and determined henceforth to devote himself more closely to books. He became assistant master at King William's College, Isle of Man ; and must have then used well his opportunity, for eventually he was elected to a Fellowship in Durham University, and afterwards, throughout a life of long and severe bodily suffering, secured by a holy career devoted to literary pursuits the love and respect of a very large circle of friends, among whom were many of the most distinguished scholars and divines of England—nay, of Europe.



A letter from his father shows how early the young student had chosen the priesthood as his sacred profession :

February 2, 1834.

. . . When I came to that part of your letter which intimated your resolution to become a clergyman, I was actually moved to tears ! I prayed most fervently that, in adopting the profession of your fathers, you might be aided by that Spirit from on high of whom cometh both our strength and support, as well as our desire to devote ourselves to the service of Him who is " Head over all things to His Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Unquestionably, let your studies be prosecuted at Durham, and *there* (if God permits) let your ordination as well as your degrees be conferred. What changes of overwhelming importance are about to be recklessly introduced by " the powers that be," you cannot fail to be aware ; but to the man, imbued as your fathers have been, with no other sentiment or motive but the glory of God and the good of souls, what avails the loss of those things which " are of the earth, earthy " ? The very gates of hell, we are told, shall not be suffered to *prevail* against the Church ; and if we, fearless of the times in which our lot is cast, persevere unto the end of our course, we have high authority for believing that we shall be both sanctified and saved."

In 1836 James Skinner took his degree, and a second class in honours. A letter dated February 10, 1836, from his father to Bishop Van Mildert, of Durham, an old friend of Bishop Skinner, was found amongst the Bishop's papers, and is touching in the deep fatherly anxiety expressed in old-fashioned phraseology. He asks from the Bishop

such counsel and advice, as may enable me to forward my beloved Son's design of following the profession of his Fathers for three succeeding generations ;

and he continues :

Being now, however, only in his eighteenth year, notwithstanding his Eligibility for a Bachelor's degree, he is far from being eligible for Holy Orders. Hence the difficulty which I and his other Relations in Scotland labour under, as to his disposal, during his minority. He himself is of opinion, that could he obtain the situation of Tutor in an English Family of truly sound Political as well as Religious Principle, with access to a good Library, he would pass the time more profitably, than perhaps in any other Situation. But alas! in my sequestered Retreat I have no access to any such family, nor am I capable to aid my Dear young Man in this, or any other attempt after suitable employment.

Bishop Van Mildert was then suffering from his last illness, but the letter is endorsed by him in faint pencil. His death, on February 21, 1836, prevented the help which he would probably have given to the grandson of his old friend, and James Skinner remained at Durham, studying, until the spring of 1839, when he became Licentiate of Theology. Dean Ranken, of Deer Parsonage, near Mintlaw, N.B., writes of him about this time :

He was present, as a young layman guest, at the dinner which followed the triennial meeting of the Scotch Episcopal Friendly Society, when something brought him to his feet, and he made an enthusiastic speech, the theme of which was the Church of Scotland, only then beginning to emerge from more than a century's obscurity. The speech was applauded to the echo, and I remember taking a note of it in my own mind, and thinking that when he came to serve the Church as a Priest, he would make his mark. He was then about nineteen or twenty. For many years his uncle Bishop William Skinner's house was my home during my visits to Aberdeen, and there I not unfrequently saw James and his brothers in their schoolboy holiday time—he the brightest of them all, and full of fun and repartee.

## CHAPTER II.

### ORDINATION AND FIRST WORK.

1839-1846.

“Our Love was new, and then but in the spring.”

IN July, 1839, James Skinner accepted an invitation from his college friend, St. Clere Raymond, to pay him a visit at his father's home, Belchamp Hall, in Essex. One of the family livings, Middleton, was, and is, held by St. Clere's uncle, the Rev. Oliver Raymond, and as the Hall and Rectory were only five miles apart, the two brothers and their families met continually. It is impossible either to omit the beautiful story which follows, or to give it in other words than those in which it has been told :—

I cannot hope to make you know what the charm of Middleton Rectory was in the days of which I write, filled with the brightness and merry voices of five fair and happy sisters. Their beauty and animation would alone have made the house delightful, but in addition they inherited from both father and mother very unusual talents both for music and painting. Mr. Raymond had made a valuable collection of pictures, and he never allowed an evening to pass without music, in which he took an active part himself, being a proficient on the violin ; indeed, at most times the house was, like Prospero's isle, “full of sweet sounds.”

There was, of course, frequent visiting between Belchamp Hall and Middleton Rectory; and Agnes, Mr. Oliver Raymond's second daughter, was an especial favourite with her uncle. I think that he went to Middleton one day, towards the end of July, to bring her back to Belchamp to assist him in making a catalogue of his pictures. I know that St. Clere went there, taking with him his friend, James Skinner, who was staying with us at the Hall; and that was the first meeting of two who were soon to be all and all to each other. Agnes returned with them to Belchamp Hall, which is just the scene for the idyl which soon began. Perhaps we were imprudent—certainly no one had thought of probable consequences; and yet what else could have been expected when such a youth and maiden met, in the very bloom of their early beauty and brightness? There were daily wanderings among those ancient avenues and gardens, after-dinner strolls, and musical evenings; and they loved each other before they knew it. Such things happen every day; but it is not often that first love is so deep and constant in a youth of twenty-one and a girl a few years younger, as to remain unchanged, only increasing in depth and tenderness, through nine years of hindrances and separation.

Agnes did not stay long at Belchamp, and nothing was said or suspected. She left us on a Monday, and returned with two of her sisters the following week for a ball in the neighbourhood. How strange it is to me to look back through the vista of years, and see in memory those two young creatures as they were at the ball that evening; dancing together whenever it was possible:—he tall and dark, with those wonderful eyes, and such brightness and spirit as I never knew in any one else; she small and fair, and as gay as he was.

You must forgive an old woman's love story. Next day there came the only shadow which I do believe ever fell upon the love of those two hearts from the moment they first met until death—nay, until now; for death touches not such sacred love as theirs. Some one told James that Agnes was engaged. He believed it at first, and drew back, wounded to the quick; while she, feeling

the change, became cold and proud. Had he been like most youths of his age, this false report had probably parted them ; and I think it was a proof of an uncommon character that his faith in her, after so short an acquaintance, triumphed, and that he determined not to lose her without hearing the truth from her own lips. He went to Middleton Rectory the next day, and finding an opportunity said to her, "I have had a great shock. I have been told that you are engaged." And here the love story of their life began, though mine must end, for from that moment their lives became as one.

But of worldly hindrances to their union there were abundance ; both were without fortune, and the lover as yet without employment. He returned to Belchamp Hall on the evening of the day on which they had plighted their troth to each other, and without having an interview with Agnes' parents. An engagement at Cambridge which could not be put off obliged him to leave Belchamp the next morning for a few days, but before he left he wrote a letter to Agnes' father, which St. Clere promised to take to him, and it was arranged that James should go over to Middleton to learn his fate on his return from Cambridge. Agnes has told me how she watched him riding up to the door, looking pale and nervous, and of her father meeting him at the entrance with a cheery "Come in, my dear fellow," which greatly comforted him. An interview followed, in which her lover completely gained her father's heart, who fully sanctioned the engagement, but was wisely firm in refusing to entertain any thought of marriage until the young man had taken orders, and could offer a home to his daughter. Meanwhile, he was at once received as a son and brother by the household at Middleton.

I do not think that Agnes' mother could have loved him more had he been her own son.

From Middleton James Skinner went to stay with Dr. Hook at Leeds. He had always looked forward to receiving his title to orders from him, and was anxious to see some-

thing of the place where he hoped in two years' time to be at work. One extract from a letter to his betrothed will show the spirit in which he entered upon his engagements and regarded his prospects of earthly happiness :—

The Vicarage, Leeds, August 21, 1839.

. . . How fervent are my prayers to God, to sanctify our union of hearts with the gentle influences of His Holy Spirit, and make love and fear of Him a bond between ourselves. I pray for you, dear —, for in a good and gracious God is my implicit trust, and that He will help us both, and keep us heart and soul, first His, and then each other's.

I have spent two delightful days with my worthy and affectionate friend, Dr. Hook, and am now just leaving. His affectionate and kind greeting of me on Wednesday quite filled my heart, and his pressing invitation to stay on, notwithstanding his own engagement to go to the Archbishop of York's to-morrow, is a most painful thing to refuse. How I long to be settled under him ! I shall love him as my father. I met a party of twelve clergy at dinner yesterday, the celebrated missionary Dr. Wolff among them, who preached an extraordinary sermon in St. James' in the evening.

About this time Mr. Skinner was appointed third master at King William's College, Isle of Man, for which many others were his rival candidates. His testimonials gained the appointment for him, in spite of his youth, and of much prejudice against him in the mind of the Principal on account of rumours that he was "a violent Oxford Tract party man." He began his work at the college in September, 1839, and remained there until June, 1841.

I had the good fortune to be in his classes (the Rev. George Deerr wrote \*) "more than forty years ago, when he was an under-

\* In the *Guardian* of January 18, 1882.

master at King William's College, Isle of Man, previous to his graduating as M.A. at Durham, and words cannot tell how he was loved, feared, and revered by his pupils.

He came among us like a star from heaven, for it was in the days when the connection between master and pupil was "war to the knife," when every *lapsus memoriae* was visited with a stripe, and a boy's supreme object was to escape punishment.

Mr. Skinner, however, reversed this order of things, so far as forms were concerned. He not only was an able teacher, clothing with vitality what would have been to many the dry dust of Homer, but he so impressed even rough raw lads by his dignified kindly courtesy, his polished mannerism and earnest devoutness, that he rarely had occasion to resort to corporal punishment.

On his leaving, we presented him with a copy of Bingham's "Christian Antiquities," which we considered a suitable gift to one whose catholic-mindedness was *prononcé* even in those days, and whose last words to us on returning thanks were, "Never forget your Mother, the Church."

Should any of his friends wish to perpetuate his memory, I shall be too glad to give anything in my power for one who contributed so largely to the happiness of my life." \*

During the summer vacation of 1840 he went to Durham to take his M.A. degree, and soon after was elected Fellow of that University. A pamphlet published by him in 1840, "On the Observance of Lent," is remarkable even now for its strong grasp of principle and perception of the true basis of national prosperity, as well as its evidence of theological learning, very uncommon in a youth of twenty-two.

On June 27, 1841, Mr. Skinner was ordained Deacon by

\* In a letter written after Mr. Skinner's death to his widow, Mr. Deerr says, "I think I ought to tell you that I am not of your husband's school of thought, but I am a catholic in charity, and my testimony to his worth and saintliness should perhaps therefore be the more valuable."

the Bishop of Peterborough at his cathedral, receiving a title from Archdeacon Wilberforce, and entering at once upon work as Curate of Burton Agnes. There was no vacancy at the time for a curate at Leeds, so that he was obliged to give up his earnest and long-cherished wish of beginning his work under Dr. Hook. Dr. Hook wrote to him in January, 1841 :

I have mentioned you to Mr. Dugard of Manchester and to Archdeacon Wilberforce of York. I would strongly advise you to accept Archdeacon Wilberforce's offer. He is entirely right.

In the letter accepting Archdeacon Wilberforce's curacy Mr. Skinner says—

Of my Church opinions, while I am most ready to afford you whatever information you may desire, it may suffice to state that, brought up as I have been in the persecuted Church of Scotland, I have been taught to divest Catholic truth of all alloying external influences prevalent in this Erastian age, and that I cherish and value my principles *for themselves*. The Church, in her ordinances, her Creeds, and her discipline, is my stay, and "to the law and to the testimony" is my appeal.

Archdeacon Wilberforce wrote in answer—

It is certainly rather a blow to me that you cannot come to me till June. But I so much like your letter that I will wait if I by any means can.

The death of his father at Forfar, on September 2, 1841, was sudden at the last, although for years he had been an invalid. The tidings were, of course, without a moment's delay sent off to James ; but there was no telegraph in those days and no railroad, and it was some days before the letter reached him. He started at once and travelled



night and day without an hour's rest, only arriving at home as the funeral of his beloved father was leaving the house. He had been waited for till the last moment. In an almost fainting condition, caused by fatigue and distress, he threw himself from the carriage, and, supporting himself on his brother William's arm, took his place among the mourners.

Nothing could exceed the Archdeacon's and Mrs. Wilberforce's kindness to the young curate, who also acted as tutor to their sons. He was continually at the rectory, where he was received as a child of the house, and had the advantage both of access to a valuable library and of forming the acquaintance and friendship of such men as Bishop Wilberforce, Archdeacons Churton and Church, Charles Marriott, Henry Coleridge, Sir Charles Anderson, and Archdeacon (now Cardinal) Manning. On July 31, 1842, he received priests' orders from the Bishop of Ripon, and about a year later was forced by health to resign his curacy. It was the first of the many trials of the same kind which through life were laid upon him, forcing him to lay down one cherished charge after another at the feet of the Master from whom he had received them. He had suffered terribly latterly from attacks of quinsy, and could not attempt to encounter another winter in the climate of the East Riding of Yorkshire; probably also his health had suffered from severe observance of seasons of fasting. Speaking to a friend towards the end of his life of the discretion and guidance needed in the matter, he gave a humorous account of his own unassisted efforts at this time, ending with: "I was my own guide, and an uncommonly bad guide I made."

He left Burton Agnes in the autumn of 1845, and undertook work the same year for a few months under the Rev. Stephen Hawtrej, at Holy Trinity, Windsor, a new district church, built partly for the accommodation of the troops quartered in the town. A good deal of Mr. Skinner's work was with the soldiers there. Canon Carter wrote: "His powers as a preacher attracted considerable attention, and made much impression. Some still resident may remember the characteristic strength with which he proclaimed the guilt of post-baptismal sin, in a sermon which aroused a good deal of attention and excitement at the time." The following letters from Dr. Pusey were upon this subject:—

MY DEAR MR. SKINNER,

I cannot but agree with you in your main outline of what you write to me on post-baptismal sin. Although one statement of yours seems to me too strong; that, "the absence of wilful sin is the condition of remaining within the Covenant" (or is not the sort of language which I should use), I may myself have led you to use the language which I should not now use (although I do not recollect having made this statement), in that in my tract on Baptism I was intent on inculcating the doctrine of Holy Scripture on one point, without accompanying the teaching with that of the remedial power of the keys. The main of what I taught I should teach now, that there is this difference between baptismal and any other forgiveness, that in Baptism a person becomes altogether "a new creature;" that he is a different being from what he was before; that he has nothing to do with his former self; then he had only his birth of nature, now he is born of God; then he was out of Christ, now he is *in* Christ. Absolution is a restoration, but conditionally upon continued contrition in proportion to his sin. It is not an absolute, I suppose, but a suspended forgiveness; the sins belong to the same self, whereas

what was before Baptism in a heathen belonged to another self, which was dead after his new birth in Baptism ; he had nothing more to do with them, as far as relates to God's judgment, than if they had been of another self. The sins of the Christian, in proportion to their magnitude, still belong to him, are to be repented of to the end.

The expression in your statement which seems to me to want explanation is "wilful." It is the word of Holy Scripture, "they who sin wilfully," but not in the sense in which it would be commonly understood now. I should think the expression which our Church uses, "deadly," "mortal" sin, would explain your meaning better. The word conveys its own meaning ; what is mortal or deadly must destroy life.

But, then, I think, while insisting on the change which heavy sin makes in a person's state, we ought (which I did not myself at first) to point to the restorative power which Christ has lodged in His Church ; that He has given the commission, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," although not in the easy way which modern systems make, but upon what our Church everywhere insists upon, "true repentance."

Again, as you were going on to qualify what you said, there will be endless differences according to the degree of light against which people sinned, their continuance in it, the way in which they were led into it, its aggravated character, requiring a deeper penitence to efface it in some cases. Penitence, in proportion to the sin, should never cease ; but since our gracious Lord has lodged the earnest of forgiveness in His Church, it may be a bright, hopeful, loving penitence, as Bishop Andrewes quotes from the ancient Church : *Da semper dolere, et de dolore gaudere.*

I think that, in opposition to the easy systems of the day, we have to insist on penitence, as a sorrowful, humble task, never to be laid aside ; that the penitent should never forget what he has been, but continually bewail it before God, out of love to Him, because he has offended Him and His glory. But, then, love always has comfort. He returns to a loving Father, not an

offended God only; to One who has loved him so exceedingly and loves him still, and has shown this love by recalling him. We must take care that we break not the bruised reed.

I have, of late years, often had occasion to minister to individual cases of penitence, by receiving confessions of a whole life, and I have seen the restorative effects of absolution—how the chains fell off from the hands, old habits (in some cases) were conquered, new grace and light and strength were infused. I believe that sins are then forgiven, if there be true contrition, and there be no relapses. Although after relapses there may still be restoration, and relapses must be treated very tenderly, lest such be driven to despair.

If, then, I were to word your fifth statement, it would be written thus :

Deadly sin, after Baptism, in proportion to its malignity, destroys the life then received; and although persons may be restored, yet it is in no easy way, but by a deep penitence, in proportion to the sins.

And I should not have used the expression "the promises consigned *upon uninterrupted sanctity*," which I should think might be misunderstood as implying something like sinlessness, whereas it is not all sin which so changes a person's state.

I should hope that you and Mr. H—— would still come to an understanding. I should be very glad to contribute to it, if I might, for from what I have heard, I have a value for him, and think he might understand you better.

I am not sure whether I have made myself clear, and my time is limited to-night. I should think you might make some explanation of your statement, "the absence of wilful sin," etc., so as to be an explanation, not a retractation, such as what I have written in page 4.

You were going to qualify what you had written. At first sight, it seems to allow too little place for "much forgiven because loving much," to make penitence too dreary a work, unrelieved by hope and love, and not to take account of the restoration through the absolution, the Holy Eucharist, and other appointed

means (as I myself first did, although I have since endeavoured to supply what I omitted) ; but one sermon cannot contain all.

You may make any use you please of this letter to Mr. H——.

With sincere thanks for your kind thoughts of myself, and wishing you all blessings,

Yours very faithfully,

E. B. PUSEY.

Christ Church, 2nd Week in Lent, 1845.

MY DEAR MR. SKINNER,

I see that I ought to have gone a little deeper, and to say that I suspect the whole of the "covenant" theology, and suspect that it brings us into endless difficulties. I know not with whom it began ; although it has had its great vogue with us, from Witsius and the Dutch school, and so Waterland, etc. I see yours is from Bishop Taylor, who is older, and in whom it has a better meaning. I should think, then, that a less technical statement of your meaning would be less objected to. That the state of Christians is implied to be a state of grace in which all former sins having been by Baptism utterly effaced, and the Image of God renewed upon him, he is to grow in grace, that image deepened in him, as he himself is more conformed to that image. That deadly sin casts a person out of a state of grace, and that since there is no second Baptism he has now to be restored by penitence ; that this penitence must be proportioned to the depth and length of his sins ; that he may be restored by contrition, but that it is on condition of continued repentance. If he ceases his penitence, his pardon would cease too. I do not mean that penitence need always be equally afflictive, but that there ought to be a continual sorrow for having offended God. This would seem self-evident. Can one imagine a person, who in anger had caused another's death, ever feeling as if he had not done it ? Can one think that any one should really understand that he had defiled the temple of the Holy Ghost ; that this could not be undone ; that what had been was ; that he was a changed being, more changed than Adam by his fall in one respect, in that he has fallen from

greater graces ; that if his soul was purified, his body, God's temple, was changed,—and not have continual sorrow, until corruption was swallowed up by incorruption ?

I should not, then, press on the lower degree of hope, certainly not to the penitent who must in every way be cheered ; but that the hope must be through a different course, “ I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me.” He, too, may be at the foot of the Lord's Cross ; he may wash His Feet with his tears, and have a sacred joy in them ; but he must never forget what he has been. He may have a lively, have any degree of hope, which God may give him ; but the more he loves God, the more he must hate his former self, and so he must of necessity be a continual penitent. If he were not, he could not have any real love for God.

Can one imagine an adulteress-wife taken under her husband's protection, and not continually full of shame ! And shall the adulteress-soul, if it realized the presence of God, not be suffused with shame at the thought of that Presence ?

With regard to your statement, I should say that it went too far : “ in the precise Covenant, there is nothing described but pardon upon holiness observed to the end.” In that those words, “ Whosoever sins,” etc., are a commission to the Church towards her penitent members ; there is provision for restoration from the falls in the Covenant. Again, in our Lord's exhortations to the Churches in the Revelation to repent, I should think it the truer to say that there is comparatively little mention of sin. Thus (as I have implied above) I should not say that the penitent sinner was not under the same covenant, since the power of the keys is part of the commission for ever given to the Church. Nor should I say that he might not have the same hope, nor that he might not attain an eminence of glory (as neither do you), as Saint Mary Magdalene (in a beautiful sermon of Archdeacon Manning for the Magdalene Asylum), only that the course is all along different. It is a course of penitence ; and the deeper the penitence, the higher the glory. Every tear is stored in God's bottle ; so that penitence may be the more cheerful in that it is not only the

condition of acceptance, through the Blood of Christ, but, through that same Blood, a means of glory. At all events, the more a sinner hates his former self the more he may feel that he is in harmony with God.

I would only say one word more, that I believe obdurate hearts would be more likely to be touched by a more loving exhibition of penitence ; that God loved them, showed His love by His forbearance, waited to be gracious to them. I should think the great fault of the Low Churchmen not the way in which they set forth the love of Christ even to the unconverted, but that they make conversion a sort of Baptism, which so effaces sin that there is no need of further penitence.

If I can be of any further use to you, pray tell me how.

Yours most faithfully,

E. B. PUSEY.

Feast of St. Matthias, 1845.

In July, 1845, Mr. Skinner undertook the chaplaincy of the District Military Prison at Southsea Castle, where he laboured zealously among the men ; and, prompted, as he writes, "by a deep and earnest sense of duty to a class of men, the most neglected yet not the least promising in our Christian country," he drew up for the Secretary of War a deeply interesting statement as to certain matters which hindered his efforts among them. It is remarkable that even in early youth he could write nothing without taking his stand on some fixed and definite principle, from which all his conclusions were drawn. He may often have failed in not allowing sufficient force to circumstances which might modify those conclusions, but those who knew him best felt the sense of strength and consistency which his immovable adherence to principle imparted to them. Dr. Pusey once said of him (speaking of waverers as to the

Creed), "Oh, as to Skinner, he is like the man in Scott's poem who set his back against the rock and called out—

'Come one, come all, this rock shall fly  
From its firm base, as soon as I.'"

To awaken and foster penitence is, he sets forth in his statement, the main end and object of any prison. "But at all events," he continues, "this is the only object of a chaplain and a chaplain's labour,—to make prisoners Christian penitents; and it is only in proportion as I make penitents that I am worth anything to the institution to which I belong." He therefore earnestly pleads for certain reforms to enable him to do more for the spiritual good of the prisoners.

To his brother George he wrote :

December 30, 1845.

As to all this about Dr. Pusey, it may serve to quiet any alarm you may entertain about myself or my opinions to declare at once, that the effect of every recent apostacy (and most especially of Mr. Newman's) upon my own mind has been to strengthen and confirm it in its stable and unalterable attachment to the Church of my baptism. I never had any scruples about my position, and still less have I any now; nay, rather, I am more and more convinced that the present trials of the Church of England are visitations upon her for good, the hand of God purging her in order to more abundant fruitfulness, and marks, therefore, of love and favour rather than of reprobation. I believe more than ever that we have with us the elements of that hidden but mighty power which shall finally draw all things to itself, and that, while in no portion of Christendom have the world's evil principles made *fewer* inroads than on our own, the Church of England may yet, by God's help, be the rallying and centre point, which shall unite the universal Church of Christ into one.

And as for the line of action which the troubles of these times demand, my mind is equally made up. Not discussion, but



*action* ; not pulling other people down, but building ourselves up ; not argument so much as prayer, and not external ceremonies, but the culture of the inward life and conscience, the hidden man of the heart, which is at the root and source of all religion. As to Rome, our wise plan is to leave her alone. To her own master she will stand or fall ; and I cannot see what concern we have with palliating them on the one side, or reviling them on the other. "*Judge nothing* before the time." We did not cast *her* off, so much as she cast off *us*. The advance must be made by her, therefore, and when she comes forward and concedes the points which *she has made* to sever us, it will be time enough for us to rise up and meet her. Meantime, nothing can be so senseless as to busy ourselves with fears and alarms, and then abuse Rome, when we have so much to do with our own hearts and consciences, and in fulfilling the work which, each in our own place and station, God hath given us to do.

With regard to Dissenters, and persons within our own pale who are practically sectarians, our line, as it seems to me, is equally clear. Not heated controversy and unkind, severe language, but kindness, and gentleness, and love ; avoiding all negations which only exasperate, but insisting on *positive* privileges and blessings, which are sure to win. Matters of mere external import, such as surplices and other ceremonies, however significative in themselves, will always do harm if pressed unduly, and in the wrong place ; and hence all the senseless and wicked outcry which has been ringing from Exeter to York. Let them come *last*, not *first*. First cultivate Christian graces—gentleness, submission, obedience, faith—and strive to make a flock earnest and serious on right principles, and *then* all that is Catholic in ritual and external worship will follow naturally : people will as little think of being without it, as of walking the king's highway without their clothes.

With regard to the Bishop of Oxford,\* I do not believe that he will take any *persecuting* line against any party in the Church,

\* Bishop Wilberforce.

and least of all against the friends of Dr. Pusey, who are in real truth his own fathers and brethren and best friends. He is by far too long-sighted a man, and too well furnished in the arts of governing, not to see, on the one hand, that all the earnest-mindedness and genuine activity is on the side which the world is hunting down; and that, on the other hand, with the popular faction, lie the elements of those very evil spirits which have once already destroyed both discipline and order in the Church, and are ready to destroy them again. I have reason to know Bishop Wilberforce's real mind, as well as any who are not his *confidential* friends, and I am saying no more than events will prove when I assure you that his own sentiments, as well as great kindness and affection of heart, will conspire to urge him to win and secure those very men whom the newspapers would desire him to drive away. He has begun to govern his diocese on the catholic model, and this is the best earnest that he will go on to do so.

With regard to Dr. Pusey, it is a mistake utterly to breathe a suspicion about his leaving us. He is day by day strengthening his position in the Church, and gathering round him such staunch men as Hook and Manning, who are not parties to give him their confidence rashly. I heard myself—for it was to myself that Dr. Pusey said it—that he was more strongly than ever riveted to the Church of England; and all that he is doing now confirms this fact. No one knows to how many he has been, within the last month or two, the means of support and comfort, nor how many souls he has kept from straying away. I should almost as soon doubt my own identity, as Dr. Pusey's strong position in the Church of England. He will never, however, publish any condemnation of Newman, and I think he is right; and they are most unreasonable who require such an unworthy test of his own stability. No man more laments Newman's "fall," as he calls it. He grieves over it, and prays for him; but Dr. Pusey is too humble-minded a man to force upon the public an act of judicial condemnation involving his own Christian charity on the one hand, and wronging the soul of a fellow-Christian on the other, who has been following the guidance of his own conscience.

One of the unhappy tokens of our un-Christian age is this constant criminating and recriminating each other. Let our own actions be the tests of our sincerity, and we shall be nearer the mark than by proving our zeal by the loudness of our vituperation.

Nothing can be more inconclusive than that the plain requirements of the Church of England are dangerous, because certain men have gone, not beyond, but *beside* them, and landed at Rome.

On this principle, one must abandon daily service, nay, the doctrine of the Trinity itself; for it is no more true that obedience to the Church of England leads to the Church of Rome, than that the belief in the Holy Trinity leads to Romanism.

Mr. Skinner had not undertaken prison work with any thought of its being more than temporary, but he remained at Southsea about a year, and then accepted the curacy of St. Mary's, Reading, under the Vicar, the Rev. S. W. Yates. Here his work was entirely of a missionary character, chiefly amongst the poorest and most ignorant. In order to gain the more influence over them, Mr. Skinner and his co-curate, the Rev. H. R. Merewether,\* lived amongst them in a wretched part of Reading, called Hosier Lane, near the National Schools. Close by they established a Workman's Reading-Room, where they spent their evenings amongst the poor who resorted to it.

Forty years ago, daily services with frequent and early Celebrations were almost unheard of; and when established by Mr. Yates and his assistant clergy, the so-called "innovations" excited both astonishment and opposition. The work, however, was signally successful, and the services were largely attended, especially in Lent and Advent, while in one year there was a considerable increase of communicants.

\* Now Vicar of Tenterden.

The weekly offertory was started and was well supported. St. Mary's Church became notorious for being far in advance of the times, and the clergy were inundated with letters of inquiry from all parts of England as to their doings and the results. One of the first, if not *the* very first Confirmation held by Bishop Wilberforce was in St. Mary's Church. An eye-witness says, "The Bishop's tact in managing the affair was very striking." For the arrangements on such occasions in those days were very different in most places from what they are now, and probably this was the first place in the diocese where everything possible was done to maintain order and reverence. It was a novelty that a procession of surpliced clergy should meet the Bishop at the vicarage, and precede him thence through the west door of the church into the chancel, where the candidates were placed in order, so as to be ready to go up to the Bishop in detachments.

Alas! before long, Mr. Skinner's health again gave way. The hard work of Lent, 1846, and the unhealthiness of the Hosier Lane abode at Reading, brought on so serious a failure in strength that he was entirely unfit for the work of the district; and he gladly accepted an offer from the Rev. G. R. Gleig, Chaplain-General to her Majesty's forces, an old friend both of his father and of Bishop Skinner, of the post of chaplain to the forces at Corfu.

His experience of work among soldiers at Windsor and at Southsea made this offer particularly acceptable to him, and there was this further advantage, that the pay seemed to justify his hopes and those of his betrothed that their long-delayed marriage might take place. They had now been engaged for seven years, separated except during the

brief happy holidays which twice a year he spent at Middleton. But never a cloud had dimmed his enthusiastic love and bright anticipations of happiness. However, Mr. Raymond decided that he must first go alone to Corfù, and prove whether his health and the climate would allow him to make a home there for his bride. He therefore parted from her for the last time in August, 1846, left England in company with his friend Archdeacon Wright, and arrived at Corfù early in September.

Before leaving the diocese of Oxford he had asked Bishop Wilberforce to give him a "letter commendatory" to the Archbishop of Corfù. The Bishop wrote in answer :

Woodhall, August 16, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR,

By some strange accident your letter has escaped my notice ; and now in much haste I send off what you have desired.

Should you not have left England already, I would wish you to call on me at 61, Eaton Place, that you may not go forth without your Bishop's express blessing.

Praying that God may have you alway in His holy keeping,  
I am ever, most sincerely yours,

S. OXON.

The Rev. J. Skinner.

To Bishop Wilberforce's letter commendatory the following answer was sent :—

To the Most Reverend Lord Bishop of Oxford, etc.  
Athanasius, the Protosyngelos \* and Vicar of Corfù, to the Most  
Reverend Samuel, Bishop of Oxford.

The Metropolitan of Corfù not having been able, on account of the severe sickness with which he has been up to the present

\* The chief monk of a set of monks who live with the Bishop or Archbishop, and testify as to his life.

moment troubled, to answer the letter from your Reverence, dated in the month of August last, it appears to me, as entrusted with the direction of the Church in this island, that I should send an answer and say that we have with brotherly love received the Reverend James Skinner commended to us by your Reverence ; and that we respect and love him as a Priest of the Most High God ; and we shall not cease to love him, inasmuch as he is given to all that is right and good, and shows himself by his life to be worthy of his priestly office.

I pray the most merciful God to guard and protect your Reverence, to give you health with long life, and to grant you His direct blessings.

Corfu, March 8, 1847, O.S.

[*Original Letter of the Protosyngelos.*]

Τῷ Σεβασμωτάτῳ Κυρίῳ Ἐπισκόπῳ Ὁξονίου, κ.τ.λ., κ.τ.λ.  
Ἀθανάσιος Πρωτοσύγκελλος καὶ Τοποτηρητὴς Κερκύρας τῷ  
Σεβασμωτάτῳ Σαμουήλ Ἐκισκόπῳ Ὁξονίου.

Χαίρειν ἐν Κυρίῳ,

Μὴ δυνηθέντος τοῦ Μητροπολίτου Κερκύρας, ἕνεκα τῆς μέχρι τοῦδε κατεχούσης αὐτὸν δεινῆς νόσου, ἀπαντῆσαι τῷ ἐν μηνὶ Αὐγούστῳ παρεληλυθότι παρὰ τῆς σῆς Σεβασμιότητος ἐπισταλέντι γράμματι, ἔδοξε μοι ἐπιτετραμμένῃ τὴν διεύθυνσιν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας τῆς νήσου ταύτης ἀντεπιστεῖλαι ταύτῃ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν καὶ ἀπαγγεῖλαι ὅτι τὸν παρὰ τῆς σῆς Σεβασμιότητος συσταθέντα Αἰδέσιμον Ἰακώβον Σκίννερ, φιλαδέλφως ὑπέδεξάμεθα, καὶ ὡς ἱερέα τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ Ὑψίστου σεβόμεθα καὶ ἀγαπῶμεν, καὶ ἀγαπῶντες οὐ πανσόμμεθα, ἀτε δη οὔτα καλοκάγαθίας πασης ἀνάμετρον, καὶ ἀξίως τοῦ ἱερατικοῦ χαρακτήρος πολιτευόμενον.

Δέομαι τον Πολυέλεον Θεὸν ὅπως διαφυλάττῃ καὶ περισκέπῃ τὴν σὴν Σεβασμιότητα ὑγείᾳ ἐν μάκροβιότητι καὶ ἐπιτεύξαι τῶν εὐθέων καταθύμων.

Ἐν Κερκύρᾳ τῇ γ' Μαρτίᾳ, φάμις' ε. π.

## CHAPTER III.

### LIFE AT CORFÙ.

1846-1848.

“Stern Albania’s hills,  
Dark Suli’s rocks, and Pindus’ inland peak,  
Robed half in mist, bedew’d with snowy rills,  
Array’d in many a dun and purple streak.”

THE situation of my house is exquisitely beautiful (Mr. Skinner wrote from Corfu in September, 1846). The sea, of a blue surpassing the imagination—like ultramarine—is like a mirror on all sides,—locked up like a lake within the magnificent mountains of Albania on the one side, and of the island on the other; and reflecting, in the light of the sun, countless tints of the greatest and most various beauty. Above rises the glorious citadel, commanding a magnificent view of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, the shores of Italy, and ancient Epirus, with the Isles of Greece; and below, at a distance of less than a mile, is the island of Vido; and on all sides sloping banks and valleys and groves, thick with olive trees, vines, Indian corn, and a profusion of the sweetest flowers.

The city itself is dirty, and in many streets and lanes disgusting: but yet it is very interesting to see the crowds of variously dressed peasants.

September 18, 1846.

I was up at seven. At eight I got into the boat, which in ten minutes brought me across to Vido.

I had service in the Fort—the men attentive and devout. After service I went to Captain Domville's cottage, who received me kindly and gave me a capital breakfast.

The boat came round for me directly after breakfast, and I returned to Corfù. I had just time to cool and refresh myself, and to rest half an hour, and then I was off to the place where the garrison attend service, until the church (which is only just above ground) is finished—a large Greek schoolroom very low in the roof, and piping hot, crammed with people up to the ceiling. In this place, I grieve to say, all sorts of sectarians are allowed to hold forth in the evening, so that from the very pulpit which I occupy in the morning American Socinians, Scotch Presbyterians, English Methodists, and sometimes pious devout sergeants, teach their respective heresies at night. It is truly an awfully low state to which the Church of England has been reduced here. She has been exhibited in an exclusive Protestant and anti-Catholic dress; and, *as such*, hated and suspected by the Christians of the ancient Church of the country. It might have been far otherwise. The heads of the Greek Church are well disposed to us—far better than to Rome—but we have not been true to ourselves, and have not only *not* cared to assert our place among the Catholic Churches of Christendom, but have done overt acts, as if we took pains to identify ourselves with all the sectarian and schismatical rebels of Europe. Only think; The Government hold communication with the heads of the Greek Church here, through the channels of an independent missionary, come out to *convert* them, and actually went the length of appointing this very man (the agent of the Bible Society) the Government Inspector of Schools!

October 10, 1846.

. . . I anticipated nothing but C——'s disapprobation, of course, in the step I have taken in coming out here; nor can I but agree with him in the main. I did not choose it, nor would



I choose it now ; but, it having fallen on me as on one who had no alternative, it is a charge assuredly of which I am not worthy, but which is most worthy of me, or indeed of the highest in the kingdom of Christ.

And this is true, whatever else may be said ; whether we regard the numbers, and the education, and the habits and principles of so large a class of the very flower of England as the British army on the one hand, or, on the other, the carelessness and neglect and cruelty and utterly heathenish manner in which they have been treated by the *so-called* Christian Government which employs them.

This is my answer, then, to all objections which are raised *now*.

Corfu, October 17, 1846.

. . . . The chief cause of the delay of this letter has been my absence from home. Strange, I dare say, it may seem to you, that I should be away from home in a country where I *can* have no one to go to ! but it is truth, and from Monday to Thursday evening I have been out visiting. Staying, too, in the house of a friend, and yet on the constant move ! In plain English, the *Meteor* war steamer on this station was ordered down among the islands to pick up a large party of the *Tyne* who have been out in boats for ten days past, keeping the pirates of the Mediterranean quiet on the coast of Greece, and the officer commanding was kind enough to invite me to accompany him, and enjoy the opportunity of seeing a little of the country. It so happened that the chaplain of the *Tyne* was on shore, and could take any duty that might occur, and, besides, the cruise would be limited within the week and obviate the necessity of my being out on a Sunday—an occurrence which might not again recur as long as I remained out here ; and therefore I closed at once with my friend's offer, and enjoyed it exceedingly.

. . . It was a beautiful evening when we left the magnificent basin of Corfu with its rocky sides, and the sea was like a mill-pond with its ultramarine blue, as bright as a jewel, and every-

thing promised well. Take a large map and follow me. The beautiful bay of Kastrades, with Ulysses' Rock (said to be the ship which, conveying him hither, was changed into a rock), Seftimo, and Cape Bianco, passed in quick succession, while the mountains (on the other side) of Albania—the ancient Epirus, and now belonging to the Turks, and part of Turkey in Europe—reflected all manner of exquisite tints in the setting sun. Soon appeared Parga on the Turkish coast, and the islands of Paxo and Anti-Paxo, very faint of course, as twilight endures but for a moment in this country, and unless it be the season of the moon it is dark as pitch immediately. I just saw where we were, and went below satisfied. The fine weather with which we started continued all night, and but for the closeness of the vessel and the vibratory motion of the steam engine, I might have fancied myself at home. Next morning I woke at half-past five, and found the vessel stationary. I rubbed my eyes and jumped up, and, peeping through the port-hole, just discerned in the east one mass of burnished gold gleaming upon a glorious mountain which appeared before me. I was on deck in an instant, and on ascending the companion ladder met the captain's servant, who was on his way to call me to get up and see the entrance to the harbour of Ithaca. The scene on reaching deck beggars all description. There surrounded me on one side the precipitous rocks of Ithaca, with water up to the very edge, in which we could find no soundings—presenting all imaginable varieties of strata of rock and colours of vegetable matter upon their surface; on the other, the picturesque Santa Maura, with its huge Monte Vonno, encircled with a host of other islands, Kalamos, Meganisi, Atokos, etc., and before me to the eastward, with the sun rising on their summits, the lofty mountains of Acarnania and the Peloponnesus.

I was not sorry to find myself safe in the snug harbour of Bathi, the chief town of Ithaca—the veriest little den (entirely shut in by rocks and mountains) you can conceive. The name is derived from the Greek word which signifies “depths,” and is so called from there being no soundings in the harbour.

Breakfast being over, Captain Butler and I prepared to go

ashore to pay our respects to the resident. He received us most kindly, and told us we might expect the gunboats in search of pirates in the bay of Bathi that very day, or the next, so that we had better not remove from Ithaca, but keep where we were till they should come up. To this we assented, and also to his kind wish to see us at dinner at half-past six o'clock. Meantime he proposed a reconnoitre of the island, and suggested one or two places within reach for our inspection—the Fountain of Arethusa, or the School of Homer, or the Palace of Ulysses. This last being on the whole nearest, and not the least interesting, we procured horses and rode as far as they could carry us, and then we began a steep ascent of more than two miles ; at the direct termination of which, on the summit of *Mount Aito*, this royal personage had his castle. Nothing but one or two ancient walls remained to mark it, and the chief attraction, beyond the imaginary one, is the magnificent view from the height, comprising the Mediterranean down to the Morea, the islands of the Archipelago, and the Adriatic up to—I cannot tell *what* part of the Turkish coast. Immediately below (the sea running with tremendous force in a breadth of seven miles between) lies the island of Cephalonia, in a little village of which, called Samos, it is said that thirty-four of Penelope's suitors took lodgings ! I concluded they must have been desperately in love to have undertaken such a ferry, and then have blown themselves with such a hill. For the latter I can speak, it would be a very rare temptation which would induce me to essay it again. And yet it was most beautiful ; every rock was covered with flowers. I literally waded among myrtles, and every now and then refreshed my mouth with the arbutus fruit, which was ripe and in great perfection. After we had descended, we found the Greek guides, with our horses, waiting for us at the bottom, and we returned to Bathi.

It was quite early when we reached the town ; we therefore rode out in another direction, up a most beautiful valley, and, at my request, stopped to call upon the Bishop of Ithaca. I went in and announced myself as a priest of the Catholic Church of England, and was most cordially received by an aged, patriarchal

prelate, upwards of eighty, with his robes on, and a grey beard, as white as snow, flowing down to his waist. He seemed much gratified by my visit, and said as much. I had an interpreter, of course, for although I can already understand most of what is *said* in modern Greek, I cannot yet converse in it. He offered me wine and fruit, both of which I declined. I left the old man highly pleased and convinced that he is a Bishop, as a Bishop should be—living frugally, seeing all classes, and being seen by them, *walking* about his diocese, and in constant communication with every one who comes under his episcopal control. . . .

Major Scargill even remarked to me, "Ah! I never see that old man without identifying him with what Bishops once were, and ought to be again."

Next morning it was raining and very disagreeable, so we could make no excursion, but at four o'clock we had a dinner-party on board, consisting of Captain Butler, his son, the resident, and two officers of the *Tyne*, who had by this time returned from their cruise and were *all hands* on board of us, and ready to return to Corfu as soon as we were inclined. It was very interesting to me to see the boats return from their expedition. The men, including ten officers, were about forty-five, who had been knocking about day and night in open boats for ten days past, among the bays and harbours of the Turkish and Greek coasts, but without success. I was present at the unloading of the boats, and you never witnessed such a scene. The merry laugh of the Jack Tar inquiring "What news?" the cheer of joy and the dance of delight on hearing that they were "homeward bound"—this from the married men; but the sigh of regret from others, that their merry cruise was over. Then the mixture of things—pots and kettles, with cutlasses and salt beef; empty bottles and broken plates, with boots and shoes; casks of water, with rifles and bayonets; pork and pistols; carpenter's tools and gridirons and saucepans; old leather and ship's biscuits; books and salt butter! Such a medley I never saw, and never laughed so much at seeing. We had a pleasant party at dinner, and the naval and military men amused me with their tales of many a battle and a

bloody fray in which they had borne part. Major Scargill spoke of the siege of St. Sebastian, at which he was present, and Captain Butler of the ill-fated battle of New Orleans and other scenes of the American war in which he had taken part, whilst the younger men of the party confined themselves to their humbler, but scarcely less interesting, rencontres with privateers or slavers. Towards ten o'clock, the sounds of music summoned us on deck, and there, to my great delight and the tender reminiscence of dear old England, we found the sailors sitting round on the main deck, playing at "a song, a cobbing, or a pint of salt water!" Almost all sang, and some with most excellent voices, giving with great spirit and taste many of our best old sea-songs.

We were off next morning at two o'clock, but had not long made the open sea, when a heavy gale of wind set in, and the ship rolled fearfully. I slept soundly, however, in the midst of it all, though when I awoke about six and tried to get up, I found it impossible to stand; so I went to bed again and remained there until twelve o'clock in the day, when we had just cleared Prevesa and the Gulf of Arta. It now became smoother water, as the headland of Corfu protected us from the south-west, from which the wind was blowing furiously, and at about three o'clock I was not sorry to find myself once more safe and sound in Corfu.

November 22, 1846.

. . . The country is now in great beauty: the picturesque peasants are gathering in their olives, and you may see hundreds of women and children, in their national costume, lying under the trees in the groves picking up the fruit after it has fallen, the only way in which they can obtain it. Then the orange groves are now one *glow* of bright golden fruit among the greenest leaves. Lemons, citrons, and these kindred fruits are now ripening; and so numerous are they, that one passes by without either wondering or coveting! Indeed, you may help yourself, if you please, and no one will challenge you. I have by this time seen most of the country, although years will not suffice to see it as it should be seen. Through the interminable groves and passes and sweet

valleys I have ridden a great deal and great distances, and sometimes have seemed to lose my breath as some of the grander views have opened upon me. I am taking every step to lay in a stock of health and strength for the summer. This may sound strange, but here that is the trying time, and very few escape fever. The heat here is beyond anything, and I am told that a few years of it enervates the constitution far more than the extremest heat of India. This, however, does not usually last more than three months, and all the rest of the year, except one month of rain, is delicious ; and what is also an advantage, when the rainy season does come, it never *so* rains on any day but you may have your two hours' fair and dry walk.

January 6, 1847.

I am gloriously well. Everybody is liable more or less just now to catch cold, but I have quite escaped, and I attribute it mainly to my regular habit of sea-bathing, which to this 6th day of January I have never omitted. We are still in the midst of our Christmas festivities. The Greek Church keep the old style, so that this very day is their Christmas Day. The Latin Church also conform, and I regret on many accounts that we do not follow the example, and when "we are in Greece, do as Greece does." I must return my calls to-day on the dignitaries of the Church who honoured me on *my* Christmas Day. It is a delightful custom, that which they retain here, of paying gratulatory visits on all the great festivals, and on the commemoration of each other's patron saint.

On New Year's Day we had a *levée*. at the palace, being the anniversary of the Ionian Constitution. All the officials and heads of departments were there in their full costume—myself among others. The Latin Bishop was there in his magnificent robes, glowing with scarlet. The aged Patriarch of Santa Maura, to whom I was introduced, seemed struck with the similarity of *my* gown to his own, and, shaking me by the hand, remarked how very much more "*respectable*" I was "than that there" Latin Bishop—" *piu rispettabile che quello lì*," pointing at him with undisguised

contempt. The Greeks have an utter horror of the Roman Catholics, amounting almost to the feeling which they bear the Jews, whom it is lawful to shoot during Passion Week! However, this same Roman Bishop (who, strange to say, is an Irishman) is more than a match for these fine old greybearded prelates. He knows more by his little finger, than they do by the experience of a lifetime, and being shrewd and cautious, he steals his march upon them with great skill. He and I are very good friends; and I am going to dine with him to-morrow, to discuss some matters of common interest in garrison affairs. A very considerable proportion of the soldiers are Roman Catholics; and I am anxious that something should be done, to give these poor fellows more consideration than in past years. Besides this, I hope to get some information out of him as to tactics at Rome, from which he has very recently returned. Lord Seaton has paid me a compliment in taking me into his confidence in the rearrangement of the University here, and I am at present sitting on a committee of inquiry into the administration of that institution, for the last ten years under a Dr. Orioli from Bologna (an Italian), who is about to leave it. It adds greatly to my work, but is very interesting from the insight which it gives into the system of foreign education generally, and of these islands in particular. Nothing can be more wretched. There is not a student in the institution who can write an original exercise in any one of the languages, ancient or modern, which are taught! Everything is done for show—there is no substance; and as for religion, there is practically no such thing taught. In point of fact, the pupils may be anything or nothing. And what is the result of this? There are not a dozen priests in the Ionian Church who can read and write, and not more than half that number who can give any account of their creed. The condition of the modern Greek Church is one of absolute vacuity: they have a form of worship which is *not* worship, but consists in the mere “προσχυνσεις,” or reverential obeisance to the saints; among the masses, there is not even the pretence of “λατρευα,” or the worship (properly so called) of God. We are purposing great things, and we have already recommended

a complete clearance in the University, and the adoption of a distinct system on the Anglican model. We have recommended also an application to Oxford, and have succeeded in getting some first-rate men to apply for the office of Director.

June 14, 1847.

I had a class of women to-day at twelve to be examined for confirmation, eight or nine, and much satisfaction I had in them. Thank God for this ! I hope to make these wives of the men very useful in helping me to soften and Christianize the soldier. They seemed impressed by my words, and one woman particularly answered every question I asked her, and proved that she had not forgotten her Catechism, which she seemed to have learnt well. On leaving, she said, "God bless you, sir, for all your kind advice."

In the evening the palace servants came for instruction and examination, and afterwards I walked up to the chapel room and gave an hour's public lecture to all the candidates.

Their attention and devotion greatly rejoiced me, and I felt much encouraged. My numbers have now swollen to one hundred and fifty candidates, and it is becoming quite a revival among the regiments. A good many non-commissioned officers have attended classes ; and I am more thankful for this, for I feel that they influence the men under their command. Besides public instruction, I am making a point of seeing each one separately. O, what a glorious band of communicants may I not hope, through God's blessing, to raise out of this ! I want to prove to the world that soldiers are not the degraded beings which some are apt to count them, but that among this unequalled body of the youth and flower of our country, there may be trained up a strong band of good Christian Churchmen.

The intense heat brought on an acute illness, but in June he writes :—

You need no longer be anxious on my behalf. My strength is daily returning ; the doctor to-day pronounced me going on well towards recovery, and brought me an invitation from Sir J. R. to go out yachting with him. The morning was so lovely that never



did I feel more reluctance in saying, "No—duty before pleasure ; I have too much to do !" I then went off to the palace, and sat half an hour with Lord Seaton, arranging to go and receive the Bishop, and also requesting that the whole garrison might be ordered to church to witness the Confirmation and hear the Bishop's address.

Lord Seaton was most kind and cordial, and gave me every possible help and encouragement.

From the palace I walked to the citadel, and assembled round me all the non-commissioned officers of the 16th Regiment. This was the only regiment in which no non-commissioned officers had presented themselves as candidates. I made them a speech, and charged them with the shamefacedness of such a fact, enlarging upon their responsibilities and the awfulness of their neglecting and setting aside this opportunity of bringing a blessing upon themselves and others.

Every non-commissioned officer who had not already been confirmed came forward and entered his name.

When I got back to my house it was past seven, and I found a large party of artillerymen and sappers and miners, who had come to be examined and instructed. I was too glad to see them to send them away.

*June 18.*—This morning I woke full of anxiety and excitement, expecting the Bishop, expecting a considerable allowance of work, and expecting *letters*, the mail being due to-day. It was a bright delicious morning. I had barely finished with my pupil, and had interviews with one or two candidates for Confirmation, when the steamer was signalled from the citadel.

To my bitter disappointment there was no Bishop ! I felt sadly put out ! I was all ready for him, and had been hurried by him considerably—and after all, not to come ! I could have cried ! We pulled away from the steamer, and returned to Lord Seaton to announce our bad luck. He was almost as much disappointed as I . . . When the letters were delivered in the evening, a note from the Bishop informed me that the illness of his sister had detained him at Malta.

July 12, 1847.

I have just heard that I must be in readiness to start to-morrow morning at six o'clock for Cephalonia and Zante with the Bishop of Gibraltar, who has brought no chaplain with him. I am completely knocked up; and no boy ever hailed a week's holiday with more joy and satisfaction than I do.

The Bishop says he never had such a Confirmation. There was one burst of response from all the men during the Litany, which went to my heart and brought up tears. That service being ended, all stood up with their hands in front.

I then read the preface, which was followed by the Bishop's address. Then came the remainder of the service—the men responding nobly. And then the Bishop proceeded to lay his hands on, and to bless *every person* individually; which was very striking—and the more that every one of my fine fellows said *Amen* aloud to each other's blessing. All was over about 7.30. I never in my life witnessed a Confirmation so affecting; if the Bishop of Oxford, instead of the Bishop of Gibraltar, had been administering, what an effect it would have had!

There were a hundred and ninety-three candidates, and on Sunday last I admitted to the Holy Communion a hundred and thirty whom I had prepared; the great body of whom I hope to bring up monthly to that holy ordinance.

Although knocked up, I am, thank God, much better in health. I am now *broiling* while I write, and with the greatest difficulty—with the thermometer at 80° odd (and at night too). I long to get away, and shall start at six to-morrow morning, and shall have a delicious sail down the coast of Epirus, through the islands, and on to Zante, coasting the Peloponnesus—in all, about a hundred and forty miles.

August 18, 1847.

God is blessing me, all unworthy as I am!

Last Sunday, at the ordinary monthly Communion, there were upwards of eighty communicants, sixty of whom were soldiers. Formerly, at no Communion throughout the year did the number of soldiers reach six.

May God grant us all perseverance, and, above all, may He grant that, having preached to others, I myself may not be cast away!

Mr. Skinner must have been a very congenial chaplain to soldiers, because he had so much of a soldier spirit himself. There was no mistaking his meaning, and he never shirked walking straight up to the enemy's guns. An address of his to the soldiers on Confirmation was printed at the Government Press at Corfù in 1847, and one sentence of it is very characteristic :

All of you who are communicants without having been confirmed, must, *of course*, present yourselves as candidates. I could not have admitted you to Communion on any other condition. You must either have been already confirmed or be *desirous* of it. Your opportunity has arrived, and I shall expect you !

The men felt they had to do with a strong man, and respected him accordingly ; they knew there would be no weak admittance to the Holy Communion of those who refused to comply with the conditions of admittance laid down in their chaplain's "order-book." With him, the trumpet never gave an uncertain sound.

The Chaplain-General to the Forces seems to have taken the same view of his character. He writes :

War Office, April 5, 1847.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

Your welcome letters of the 23rd of February and 10th of March reached me together the day before yesterday. You are a fine fellow—a man after my own heart, who will not permit himself to be overcome by difficulties, and to whose exertions God is sure to give a blessing. . . .

You are doing good service with your Lent lectures ; and it gladdens my heart to learn that the officers attend. I saw a Captain Fanshawe, of the Engineers, the other day, who spoke of you and your usefulness exactly as I could have wished. . . .

God bless you, my dear Skinner, and forward you in all your righteous endeavours.

Ever yours most sincerely,  
G. R. GLEIG.

War Office, August 4, 1847.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

Lord Seaton's application in your favour for a horse allowance has gone directly to the Secretary at War, and will be decided upon without my having an opportunity to support your claim. I quite feel that a horse is as necessary for you as it is for a clergyman in the West Indies; but there may not be the same feeling upstairs! But whatever the answer may be, you must not think of resigning. Rather relax a little in your efforts during the hot season. Do anything, indeed, except abandon a place in which you are doing so much good, and to which I should find extreme difficulty in sending, just at present, a fit successor. I am aware of the difficulty of *relaxing* to a generous nature like yours. But remember that the choice lies between putting restraint upon yourself, and suffering, it may be, some inadequate or ill-disposed stranger to come and mar all that has yet been done. Don't talk of resigning under any circumstances. Rather be patient and persevering, and good will come out of it to many, as well as to yourself.

I rejoice heartily over your successes with the poor soldiers and their long-neglected families. Believe me, that the reports which I receive of you from all quarters—among others, from Lord Seaton—make me glad! I thank God that you are what you are, and I pray earnestly that you may reap, in more ways than one, the fruit of the good tree which you have planted.

I am always yours most sincerely,  
G. R. GLEIG.

Rev. J. Skinner.

January 13, 1848.

I dined last night with the Roman Catholic Bishop, and had a very pleasant party. It was very interesting. He was supported on his right by the Archbishop of Corfu, and on his left by myself.

There were, besides, three Roman Catholic priests (an Italian, a Spaniard, and an Irishman), a Romish layman, and two Greek *nobili*.

Our conversation was all in Italian. We did not touch on controverted points in the least. We were all most friendly together, and I went home lamenting that such brotherly union could not be *real*, and deeper than the mere common courtesy of hospitality.

March 8, 1848.

Yesterday the funeral of the Archbishop of Corfu took place, and a most imposing scene it was. No one could fail to be impressed by the amazing reverence and decorum of an immense crowd, which in England would probably have been riot, confusion, and profanity. There were upwards of two hundred priests in full copes, magnificently embroidered, and each, in ranks of two files, carrying candles and chanting solemnly as they went the mournful funeral psalm. Then came the body, sitting erect upon the archiepiscopal throne, magnificently robed, with the gorgeous mitre on its head, the Gospels bound in gold and jewels in its right hand, and the crosier of gold in its left, borne on the shoulders of six priests in full canonicals. The expression of the good old man's face was that of calm innocent sleep, and not in the least like the horror of death. Behind followed all the authorities, senators, legislators, and others, military and civil, I among them in full canonicals, making in all a procession of many hundreds, and accompanied by the inhabitants of the *whole island*, to the sum of many thousands.

It was a strange mixture of ecclesiastical with military pomp. The deceased prelate was buried with the honours of a major-general. The guard of honour preceded the two hundred and fifty priests, their splendid band playing the "Dead March" in *Saul*; and the great guns from the citadel, as well as the field guns of the Royal Artillery, fired the usual salute.

Beautiful and striking as a military funeral is *in itself*, to my mind the mixture was the only drawback to the extreme beauty

and solemnity of the whole ecclesiastical ceremony. First, because it was so obviously incongruous, and second, because wherever our English are required to join in an occasion of the kind, they cannot leave their irreverent remarks and manners behind them. A funeral oration was pronounced in Greek by a priest. He commenced it standing at the feet of the body as it sat on the throne ; but presently such an outcry was raised by the multitude outside to hear it, that he proceeded out of doors, and concluded in the open air.

The body was buried just as it sat, erect and in all the paraphernalia of office ; lowered into a vault prepared for it, to abide the day of the restoration of all things. There is something in this which perhaps jars upon the notions which our customs are apt to suggest ; but no doubt this uncoffined corpse expresses the more lively faith in the resurrection, and especially the attitude of watchful preparation which ought especially to be associated with the office of a prince and a ruler in the Church of God.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EARLY MARRIED LIFE.

1848-1851.

"The time is great.

What times are little? To the sentinel

That hour is regal when he mounts on guard."

IN May, 1848, Mr. Skinner was allowed to find a *locum tenens*, and to return to England on six months' leave for his marriage, to which, after the long probation of nine years, Mr. Raymond had given his full consent. A few extracts follow from the journal kept on his way home.

*May 24.*—Left Corfu under a royal salute from the batteries in honour of the Queen's birthday. Just before weighing anchor there came on board a Russian nobleman and suite of ten persons, Count Tolstoy, his sister Madame Apraxia with her daughters, and an English governess. I had formed high anticipations of this party from the account of one or two friends who had known them, and considered myself exceeding lucky in having them for fellow-passengers. . . . The Russian family were accompanied by the Küsters, Mussurus, and Mr. Meyersbach, and Scandella, the Spanish priest, followed. He introduced me to the count, who at once pulled out an old number of the *Christian Remembrancer* as a sort of *card*; and pointing to a review of Blackmore's "Russian Church," edited by Palmer, began to ask me if I was a "Puseyite." He had been to Oxford and had made Dr. Pusey's acquaintance,

and spoke most enthusiastically of Palmer and all his interest in the Oriental Church. He lamented that the tendency of Church-people in England was Romeward, and seemed surprised when I corrected him, and claimed for the Oriental Church a large share of our sympathy; although naturally our affections lay in the West.

We discussed Palmer, and agreed that *his* tendency, from manner, temperament, and language, was rather to drive people *from* than to win them *to* his views. "Palmer," he said, "had told him of himself that it was said he was *antediluvian*!"

I was introduced to the English governess, whom I had seen in my church on Sunday—a very pleasing person, on presenting whom the count said, "We have many battles, elle est un peu protestante!" I said, "Plus d'un peu peut-être," for there are many who are *ultra*-Protestant. "A *little* protestant," he replied, "is more than enough."

Spoke of the ignorance and superstition of the Greeks. Not so in Russia. The gospel is preached there, and the sacraments administered in a language understood by the people.

In Russia a priest is *obliged* to marry. If a deacon's wife dies, he cannot be made a priest; he must either become a monk, or remain a deacon.

The count was very much struck by the French school of young men in Corfu, and regarded it as a most melancholy sign.

The young ladies made themselves exceedingly agreeable; like all Russians, their knowledge of languages is endless. They speak English beautifully. "Are you chaplain to the regiment?" asked one. "How *can* men do well without each knowing their priest, and having his spiritual wants supplied? I suppose you will speak to the Government and have this arranged when you go to England!"

Count Tolstoy spoke with great horror of our admission of Jews into Parliament, and asked me whether it could be true (as was alleged) that any of our Bishops would vote for the Jew Bill.

Spoke with surprise of Hampden's appointment, and the degradation of our Church to the State.



A Prince Mourusie on board appeared to be a person worth discovering. Of a wealthy Moldavian family, he had been expelled from his country just now for leading in a movement, not for a republic, but simply for a constitutional administration of his country's laws. He states—what is remarkable—that nothing gains such ground in his country among the better classes, as that loose French literature which leads to infidelity. . . .

May 25.—Came on deck about eleven, and had a long talk with Madame Apraxia, a most delightful person. She had conceived quite erroneous views about the relation of Greeks and English at Corfu. Explained that the Greek Society had made itself distasteful to the English, and the English mutually so to the Greeks, on account of many circumstances in private life which would not bear repetition; that there were faults on both sides for which no mere external results were sufficient to account. Explained also the nature of the power of veto which the Ionian Government exercise upon the selection of a Bishop by the clergy, and suggested how wholesome it was, considering the station and attainments of the electors.

She spoke most enthusiastically of her own Church in Russia, and with excessive horror of the processions and worship of relics in Corfu—"tout a fait à la Romaine"—and disclaiming it entirely for Russia!

Education in Russia for the priesthood very complete. Five years at the *Séminaire*, of which there is one in each province, and ten at the *Académie*, of which there are five—Petersburg, Moscow, Kief, Kassan, and Kharschoff.

Often consecrated deacon and priest in one day.

Towards afternoon a strange steamer came in sight, bearing a red flag, or a black one on the main. She fired mètre guns at us, and seemed bearing down rapidly upon us. We put on steam and got out of her way. The captain was dreadfully alarmed, and did not seem to know what to do. The suspicions are that she was a Genoese, and we did wisely to get away!

May 26.—Awoke about seven by the stopping of the steamer. A fishing-boat astern came to announce to us the pleasing intelli-

gence that Trieste was blockaded, and that our orders from the Austrian Lloyd's were to go into Pola and remain there; that the united Genoese, Sardinian, and Venetian fleets were on the look-out to take up all the Austrian steamers they could find, and that on no account we must risk our packet, which for making a defence was in as helpless a position as can well be conceived. It seems to me a great mistake sending us to Pola: we ought to go up to Fiume, where there is secure anchorage, and the distance from Trieste much shorter. However, go we must!

Reached Pola about nine o'clock, one of the most lovely bays imaginable. Full of beautiful little islands, and crowned by the most magnificent ruin conceivable—an Amphitheatre larger than the Coliseum at Rome, or than that at Verona, built by Augustus; it is the attraction, of course, to this place, interesting as it is on account of its historical associations, as old as Jason and the Golden Fleece.

After breakfast, visited all the lions. Temple of Augustus and Roma—a most beautiful little ruin, perfect and rich beyond expression. Temple of Diana—not so perfect, and apparently so disfigured by Venetian renovation, as to have lost its original character. The Amphitheatre—the *sight* of the whole; stupendous effect; scale magnificent; perfect in all its arches, and sufficiently preserved in all its interior proportions. A gateway—very elegant, recently discovered, and not mentioned by Murray. The “Porta Aurea”—a most beautiful triumphal arch of the same age with the Amphitheatre. We then walked to the site of the ancient city; a mere plain, with not so much as a stone upon it.

*May 27.*—Dressed this morning earlier than usual and went ashore. Spent half an hour in the cathedral most calmly. With my own Prayer-Book, the early English windows, the narrow chancel, and the short transepts, I could have imagined myself in an English country church. Felt, in spite of our divisions, that the house of God, in whatever land, was a home.

Returning to the steamer, I found Count Tolstoy, Madame Apraxia, and her daughter pushing off to go to church; having discovered that there was an Oriental church in the town, pre-

sided over by a Slavonic priest. I had mentioned to the count the interest I took in these matters, and we had arranged to visit this church together. However, on his return to the ship he told me that he had not found the priest, who lived at a village called Pevoi, eight miles distant, and to whom, therefore, it would be interesting to pay a visit. The count having ordered the only available carriage in the place—a primitive cart, made of a few unworked larch spars, and drawn by two rough ponies—we made a start. The count was a delightful companion, and the country most lovely. Vineyards on all sides, and highly cultivated fields, betokened an industry in the inhabitants which I greatly envied for the not less favoured natives of my own Corfu.

The count is the warmest Churchman I ever met. All his whole soul is centred in this subject, and all his conversation leads to its interests and concerns. Our conversation took a general turn. Lamented bitterly the vaunt, often too justly made, that the followers of Mahomed were more virtuous and devoted than the disciples of Christ. The count believes this accounted for by ascribing it to the devil's agency. Mahomedans very numerous in Russia, especially in Chassau, the natives of which are very much to Russia what the Moors are to Spain. The bond of unity, he said, is much stronger in attaching Orientals to the Church and to each other, than among the Western Christians, partly probably because of the continued persecutions, which must sharpen the feeling of mutual love in those who have equally to share them. Russia the only country in which the Orthodox Church of the East is triumphant; and Nicholas, being the only orthodox monarch in Christendom, is prayed for by all the orthodox Christians at Antioch and Jerusalem, as well as at Petersburg and Moscow.

We drew near to Pevoi, and soon found an affecting illustration of our conversation.

This is a remarkable village. Alone in Idria it unanimously adheres to the orthodox Eastern Church, and preserves the Illyric language, which approximates very closely to the Slavonic, of which indeed it is but a dialect. I was struck by the evident shame with which the Roman Catholic inhabitants of this imme-

diate neighbourhood regard the Illyric. They speak Italian, and will not allow that they know any other ! Not so the simple Pevoites. Murray speaks of them as a Greek colony. They are no such thing, nor does their costume or manner in the least resemble Greek. They have no connection with Greece whatever. They are Sclavi, and were originally bred upon the soil, and remain a witness to this day against the apostacy of their country, upon which no doubt Roman and Venetian influence has done its work. We had some reason to doubt, at one part of the road, whether our voiturier was not misleading us ; and getting out of the carriage, we accosted two poor women tending their few sheep in the green lane. The count spoke to them in the Sclavonic tongue, and it was delicious to see their bright eyes beam love upon him as he uttered the words, "Are you faithful Christians of the Holy Orthodox Oriental Church of Christ?" They instantly made the sign of the cross according to the Eastern mode, and replied, "We are faithful Christians of the Holy Orthodox Church of Christ by the grace of God !" "And Slave?" added the count. "Slave," they replied. "And I am so also," he continued, "a Russian, and am come to wish you God-speed." The women burst into tears, and would have embraced him had he permitted them ! "Voilà"—he turned to me—"voilà, c'est la force de l'Église !" It certainly was a touching scene, and I sighed within me for some better evidence of such a bond among ourselves, than the cold, heartless, and unreal profession which makes us but brethren in name. These women directed our steps aright, and we were soon in the village. We instantly sought out the priest, and found him a right hearty, good-looking old gentleman, in the best possible state of bodily preservation. He was dressed in a blue cassock with a crimson band, a skull-cap, and had a grey flowing beard. He welcomed us with no less affection than the poor women. To me, as a priest of the English Church, he was exceedingly kind, and said in Italian (for we conversed in that language) how much it gratified him to make the acquaintance of a priest of that Church, to the honour of which he had heard so much. It seemed, however, to delight him most (as I have always

observed in the Greek priests) to feel and know that I was not a Romanist. He addressed me always as "Reverendissimo"! Soon we had all the Church books and holy vessels, and all the things appertaining to the sanctuary, upon the table, and I was delighted with all. The holy vessels were handsome and plain—great beauty, but no tawdriness; and what pleased me most, the Holy Gospels were reduced to the language which the people spoke and could understand. The old priest dwelt to me with much emphasis upon his rejection of the word *hostia*, and his preservation of the unmutilated Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord. We adjourned to the church, where all things, much simpler and more decent than in the Ionian Isles, pleased me greatly. He catechizes the children of his parish, and has a good school—two important facts which one looks for in vain either in Greece or in the islands of the Ionian republic. The good man's hospitality was not confined to kind words. He produced some delicious muscat, made from his own vines and by himself, and called, from its exquisite flavour of roses, "Vino di Rose." He insisted, moreover, after the manner of the East, on giving us coffee, but we escaped on condition of taking with us a bottle of his favourite wine.

Our voiturier proved rather a good specimen of the cautious Austrian. I asked him on which side he was, but he *would* not understand my question. At last, putting it to him in the very most direct way, whether he preferred the Austrian, or would choose the Italian Government, he simply replied, "Si dice che ci sarà un' altra potenza qul." "Non è vero," I said, "ma se ci sia, sarà molto peggio per voi." He seemed for an instant to suppose I had said *buono*, and seemed delighted with the sentiment; but on my repeating *peggio* very strongly, he said, "Ah, peggio. Sì, sì, sicuro—peggio—anch' io penso così." His real opinion evidently was the other way.

Early in June Mr. Skinner arrived in England.

We were married on July 18, 1848 (Mrs. Skinner wrote), and I became his blessed, happy wife. The summer was spent in Scot-

land and different parts of England among his relations and mine, and in November we found ourselves in our lovely home at Corfū. His life, as regards his work, was much the same after his marriage as it was before. I remember quite well being struck by the marks of love and respect shown to him by the soldiers. Many years after this time (I think in the summer of 1859 or 1860), as we were walking in St. James's Park, a soldier saluted my husband from his sentry-box, the noise of his musket attracting our attention. We stopped, and then the man said, "You were my chaplain, sir, at Corfū;" and his whole face glowed with pleasure.

In the early spring of 1849, my husband had several very severe attacks of quinsy, one of these bringing him nearly to death's door. All the following summer he was much out of health, but he worked on, never sparing himself even in the hottest weather. By this time the garrison church in the citadel was completed: it was never consecrated, only licensed by the Bishop of Gibraltar. My husband now increased the services, so as to give the soldiers the opportunity of coming *voluntarily* to some of them. The regiments were only required to attend church once on Sunday, and that in the morning, and this was the only service (except an early one at Vido) that the chaplain was required to give. But my husband had an afternoon service every Sunday, and also week-day services in the evening, with sermons or instructions during Advent and Lent, which were well attended, and on Saints' Days. He also had communicant classes frequently, both for the soldiers and for their wives, at his own house.

His home life was one of almost ideal happiness and brightness. To his brother George, who three years previously had married Margaretta, eldest daughter of Mr. Raymond, he writes, on New Year's Day, 1849:

All the signs and tokens of Christmas joy which we see around us here, different as many of them are, recall to our memories the blessings and happy gifts of that happy time as we knew it at

Middleton, and among the circle of those we loved most on earth. And the greatest joy of all, to absentees such as we, is this : that in those circles of loved ones, which go on gathering round the paternal hearth, first missing one, and then another of its members year by year, we are not forgotten. Though absent in body, we are present in spirit, and the chords of Christian love answer to each other in all our hearts, as if no separation between us were known. My dearest George and Maggie, may this return of another year be to you and your pets the foretaste of many, many happy years to come ! God will make us happy in His own way. That is better than *our* way. Though, therefore, you may have your sorrows and your trials, you will haply be the *rather* happy. And so I pray for you, not that you may have all the future as you may wish it, but that your future may be *happy*, as God wills and works for the enduring comfort and joy of all who love Him.

This has been an eventful year which has just passed—to me an especially eventful year. Blessings have preponderated in my cup, as they do, I think, in the lot of most of us, if we are candid. Now do you, my dear brother and sister, pray for me that the year I have entered upon to-day may be a year of gratitude to God, and the benefactors He has raised up for me, and that I may show my gratitude and love in obedience. . . .

Two or three letters from the young wife to her mother give so vivid a description of the *quasi* viceroyalty at Corfu while still connected with England, that they are inserted here.

New Year's Day, 1849.

The 1st of January is the anniversary here of the Constitution of the United Ionian States, and is a very grand day. Lord Seaton holds a *levée*, at which all the Greek and Romish clergy, the gentlemen of the town, the officers and senators, Greek and English, attend. Sometimes Lady Seaton asks a few ladies to witness the proceedings from a gallery in the state-room, and I was asked and went with Mrs. Walpole. It was rather an absurd sight, because there is so much form and fuss about nothing. The *levée* is held

at eleven o'clock. Lord Seaton in a most splendid uniform, and completely covered with orders and medals, stands in the room surrounded by all the principal people of the place ; he representing the British sovereign, and they the English court. James (representing, I *suppose*, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York at least, if not the whole bench of Bishops, English and Irish !) stood on one side in his full canonicals, his tights and silk stockings, with blazing buckles on his shoes.

Then all the staff officers and other great men stand round, all splendidly dressed. When the court is quite arranged, the scene begins, and every one who likes to come and bow to the Lord High Commissioner does come, and when the bow is made, the bower walks out of the room through another door ; and so, when every one who intends to come has come and is gone, Lord Seaton bows to his court and immediately retires to recover, I should imagine, the crick in his neck occasioned by such continual bowing ! It did my heart good to hear the fine band playing the English national airs, " God save the Queen," " Rule Britannia," etc., and my chief amusement consisted in observing the awkward bows and scrapings of some of the unfortunate men, who evidently did not know what to do with either their heads, arms, or legs.

May 29, 1849.

The Greek Ascension Day is, like their Easter, one week later than ours, so last Thursday was their *Festa*, and it is *the festa* of the year. In the morning they all go to church, and as usual I found that Pierro had gone at four o'clock in the morning. The afternoon is devoted to rejoicings of a more worldly turn. About two miles out of the town is a beautiful place called Ascension ; it is a pretty village, consisting of but few cottages, but a beautiful olive grove on a cliff just above the blue sea. To this place on Ascension Day all the Greek peasants repair, and spend the day in roasting lambs *whole* (I saw about ten at one fire !), eating, drinking, singing, dancing, and fiddling. The country women, some coming from immense distances, appear in the gayest and richest costumes, and women who on other days



have to work in the fields and wear the coarsest clothing, on this day come out arrayed in the richest Genoa-embroidered velvet and real gold ornaments. Several of them had no less than six or seven heavy gold chains round their necks, and their fingers covered with rings, some as large as a half-crown piece, roughly set, but very fine stones. They would scorn to wear imitations, and work hard and save all to buy this *festa* finery. The richest dresses look the oldest, and, I am told, have been handed down from generation to generation as heirlooms. The prettiest and most amusing sight was to see the peasants dance the *Romaika*. They stand in a circle, the men on one side and the women on the other, each person holding the end of a handkerchief, by which means the circle is united. Then they dance round very slowly to the music of two fiddles, the fiddlers standing in the centre of the circle, which play a very monotonous tune, and both dancers and fiddlers look as intensely grave as though it were the most important moment of their lives, and perhaps their gravity is the most ridiculous part of the scene. Everybody in Corfu goes out to see the *Festa*, some in boats and some in carriages, and certainly it is a pretty sight. We went and returned by water, taking Paraskevi with us, who was dressed in a lilac barège dress, white shawl, and drawn white muslin bonnet with pink flowers inside! She had brushed her hair till it shone like a raven's wing, and had washed her bronzed face till that shone again like a brass pan. However, I must say she had managed to arrange her dress very becomingly, and I am so really fond of the dear little creature that I can overlook this one weakness, love of finery.

June 7, 1849.

The new Lord High Commissioner, Mr. Ward, is come, and Lord Seaton is gone. This is a matter of great regret to the majority of the people here. . . . On Friday we went to take leave. It was most affecting. . . . But the sight on Saturday was the most imposing I ever witnessed, and so touching that I am sure I have not cried so much since I left England. But I must tell you, what will interest you perhaps as much as anything to hear, that

in the morning, when James went to take leave, Lord Seaton's manner was most warm and friendly to him, and on parting he said, "I must again repeat what I have often had occasion to remark, that you are the best military chaplain I ever met with, and I have had a good deal of experience. You know the way to gain a soldier, and I highly approve of all you have done and are doing here." Was not this pleasing, dearest mother? . . . But I must now tell you of the departure. The steamer which was to take them to Trieste lay exactly opposite my windows, about half a mile from the shore, and the place where the party would take the boat is exactly under my windows, so I could not have been better situated to see the whole procession than on my own balcony. . . . The scene was a heartrending one. It was just like a funeral; everybody with such a long face, and many in floods of tears, sobbing and crying. The crowd under our windows was immense, and the sea seemed alive with boats filled with people. At last the palace party, preceded by an awful cloud of dust, and a mob of people running to get good places on the sea-wall, made its way towards the boat. It was a large procession, but of course the principal actors in the scene were Lord and Lady Seaton, their three sons and three daughters. They walked quickly, the ladies with their veils down, and Lord Seaton bowing to all around, who set up a deafening cheer. . . . As soon as he set his foot on the boat, the cannons began firing, and the Greek and English bands played "God save the Queen." It sounded so beautifully off the water; but it was when the band struck up "Should auld acquaintance be forgot," that every eye was moistened, and here the cheering was immense—it echoed again from the rocks; and through the telescope I could see how deeply affected poor Lady Seaton and the Miss Colbornes were. Lord Seaton stood up in the boat, bowing to all around, and as it neared the steamer the shouting seemed to increase. I saw people crying as if they had lost their dearest friend, and I think James and I were among the worst! However, it came to an end at last. A great many people accompanied them to and got on board the steamer, but these, too, were obliged to tear themselves

away. The noise and cheering and shouting "*Adieu, adieu,*" did not cease till the steamer was fairly on her way, and for myself I watched till it had got many miles away. As soon as ever they were fairly off, the guns began firing again for Mr. Ward, who, until Lord Seaton had really vacated, could not be saluted as Lord High Commissioner.

The happiness of the home at Corfù was completed by the birth of a little daughter on November 4, 1849. It is touching, remembering the end, to read the newly made father's words of thankful delight, and his playful description of her who was to be his only child.

My heart is too full of joy and gratitude (he writes to Mrs. Raymond) to trust myself to words, when I would tell of God's love and goodness and my own unworthiness. Pray for me that I may love and serve Him better, and so shall the praise I owe Him be the more acceptable in His pure and holy eyes. And now I will tell you of my precious little gem, the future "*Agnes Raymond*"—for so, after that name which I have loved so long and faithfully, she is to be called. *I* could swear it before the justice, there never was such a child born! A perfect beauty! She promises to be lusty and strong, and of an easy temper; so at least I think, for she goes to sleep with as much coolness and composure, as if the world could go on without her. In fact, a new and irresistible reason has grown up why I should try to get home, and find employment out of a garrison town.

Without any exaggeration, she is one of the very loveliest babies that ever was born, and whether she pleases other people or no, she pleases her papa and mamma, and makes them pray, with deep and earnest prayer, that she may grow up *good*—which is better than beautiful—steadfast in faith, and rooted in charity, and that she may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, as finally to reach the land of everlasting rest.

In the spring of 1850 Mr. Skinner's health again broke down, and at times he was utterly unfit for his work. His

doctor declared that he could not, without great risk, venture on another hot season at Corfù ; and his friends in England, being most anxious that he should return home, made every effort to find some work for him in this country. At that time the incumbency of the Episcopal church of St. Mary's, Glasgow, was vacant. Mr. Skinner was known to some of the trustees, and, as there seemed to be no doubt of their unanimously electing him, and that the Bishop of Glasgow pressed him to accept the post, he left Corfù in May, 1850, with the hope of undertaking work in his native land.

There are a few lines in his handwriting of parting counsel to his soldiers :

One word more and I have done.

There are some here to whom I now speak for the last time. That is a solemn thought, for it involves the humbling reflection that next time we meet, it may be to give in our accounts before the tribunal of God. May God's blessing go with you, and bring you safely through all the changes and chances of this restless world. But let the warning of this season upon which we are about to enter be told, and let my last caution to you be remembered. A man must either deny or indulge himself. There is no middle or indifferent state. The not denying is indulgence. It is throwing the reins on the neck of his lusts, though he may lack the boldness to set the spur. O my men, positive sins gather and fester in the untended moral habit before you are aware that they have so much as gained an entrance. It may be you do not seek the sin ; you may not be forward in the temptation ; you may not invite it. You may be minded not to indulge it ; you may even be troubled at its approach ; but if you do not deny it, the plague spot will fasten upon you and bring you to ruin.

Out of small beginnings such as these there often issue such settled *sins* as turn men back from following Christ for ever !

May God in His mercy save you from such a fate !

Of one thing I am quite sure (Mr. Gleig writes), that his retirement from the service was a great grief to me, both because I felt that the army lost thereby an able chaplain, and because the reasons which induced him to take the steps seemed to me, at the moment, inadequate. . . . The last time we met was at Aldershot, where he visited his son-in-law,\* Mr. Fisher, I think in the year 1874. He then looked ill and worn, but retained all the fire and vigour of mind which distinguished him through life. He was a noble fellow; a little too stern, in my opinion, as a Churchman for the age in which he was born, but worthy of all esteem as a man of the purest life and most unbending principle.

Through his zeal, activity, constant attention, and able instruction, the conduct of the regiments was much improved under his charge at Corfu.

The late venerable Field Marshal Lord Seaton wrote, on September 1, 1849 :

I believe no chaplain ever discharged his duties with greater profit to the soldiers than he did during the time I was in command on that station.

But it seemed as if, through life, he was ever to sow the seed which others were to reap. He went to Glasgow on reaching England, but after every arrangement had been made for his becoming Incumbent of St. Mary's, where he would have had a large field of missionary labour, he became so ill that all hopes of his undertaking the post had to be abandoned, and it seemed most doubtful whether he would ever be fit for work again.

It was necessary that he should undergo some regular medical treatment, and, with his wife and child, he took up his quarters in London.

\* His *nephew-in-law*.

## CHAPTER V.

### ST. BARNABAS', PIMLICO.

1851, 1852.

“‘O che sant' uomo, ma che tormento!’ diceva tra se Don Abbondio.  
‘Tutti questi santi sono ostinati.’”

ST. PAUL'S, Knightsbridge, the mother church of St. Barnabas', Pimlico, is itself a new church, the first stone having been laid in November, 1840. The district attached to it, taken from the parishes of St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. Peter's, Eaton Square, was formed into a benefice distinct in itself, and invested with a completely parochial character in things ecclesiastical. It consists of a long narrow strip of land, about a mile and a quarter long, running from Hyde Park down to the Thames, near Chelsea Hospital, containing, in 1840, a population, at the lowest estimate, of twelve thousand. Of these a large number were amongst the first in London, as to rank, riches, and education, while a far larger number were amongst the poorest and most neglected.

Where was the man to be found who could deal wisely with both rich and poor, and bring a powerful influence to bear upon important work in the new district? Bishop Blomfield, with whom the appointment lay, chose for this

post the Rev. W. J. E. Bennett, then Minister of Portman Chapel, Baker Street. "Mind you make a good Churchman of Lord John Russell," the Bishop said, when sending the new incumbent to his charge. "I'll try," was Mr. Bennett's answer. He went to St. Paul's possessing the Bishop's entire confidence, and earnestly desiring to carry out his wishes. "I hope I shall do as you would desire," he said to the Bishop, "but if at any time you should be displeased by my line of action, *I promise you that I will resign my benefice.*" His ministry at St. Paul's began in 1843, when the new church was consecrated—at a critical and important moment. For in the preceding year the Bishop of London had given the famous Charge by which, on the whole, he set the seal of his approval on the Tractarian movement. We have seen, in Mr. Froude's letter, how the first seeds of this movement were sown; now for nine years it had grown vigorously, its teachers filling churches and pulpits, and laying hold of the hearts of men. And then, to use Mr. Bennett's own words, "just when the revival was at the height of its popularity, without any of the fears or jealousies which subsequently molested it, the Bishop of London, in his Charge of 1842, thought fit to introduce it to the observance of the clergy in terms of general approbation." Speaking of the celebration of divine service, the rubrics and canons, Bishop Blomfield used these words:

Now, it is impossible to deny that a great degree of laxity has crept over us in this matter, and we are much indebted to those learned and pious men who have forcibly recalled our attention to a branch of duty too imperfectly performed. In some instances, indeed, they have gone beyond the line of duty and of prudence, in recommending or practising ceremonies and forms not authorized by their own Church, and in ascribing to others an import-

ance which does not properly belong to them ; but there can be no doubt of their having mainly contributed to the progress which has been made during the last few years towards a full and exact observance of the Church's rubrical injunctions, as well as to a better understanding of the foundations and proportions of her polity, and the nature and value of her discipline. . . . The truth is, reverend brethren, that until the Church's intentions are completely fulfilled, as to her ritual, we do not know what the Church really is, nor what she is capable of effecting. It is the instrument by which she seeks to realize and apply her doctrines ; and the integrity and purity of the one may, as to their effect, be marred and hindered, in what degree we know not, by a defective observance of the other.

Bishop Blomfield's Charge was the spark which kindled materials ready and prepared into such a fire as he had little thought of.

But upon none could his words have fallen with greater effect than upon the young Incumbent of St. Paul's. His heart grew warm towards the system of church restoration so prominently put forward ; his reason was convinced, his determination was fixed, and he was one with whom no wavering was possible, either in principle or action. He came to his new work fresh and ardent, resolved, in a new church and with a new congregation, to carry out the line of action suggested by the Bishop's Charge.

And seldom can any priest have met with so hearty and joyous and affectionate a response from his flock, or left a deeper mark behind him. But his very success in influencing the educated made him the rather turn to the poor and ignorant, who were in danger of being crowded out of St. Paul's. About six thousand of these lived in the district adjoining Chelsea Hospital, and at the furthest



distance from the church: two thousand poor children needed education, and there was room but for four hundred. Mr. Bennett, therefore, set before his richer parishioners the duty of providing church and schools for this poorer district, at the cost of at least £14,000. He wrote them a letter which even now, as one reads it, stirs the heart like a trumpet note. After telling them the facts of the case, he said:

The existence of this poor population now immediately around you depends entirely upon *yourselves*. You are the indirect creators of it. It is you that have brought them here, from the magnificent dwellings in which you live, and the horses and carriages which you keep, and the many servants whom you require to minister to your wants. Belgrave Square, Eaton Place, Chesham Place, and Lowndes Street, with others of the like grandeur and comfort of dwelling, is the cause of Ebury Street, and Queen Street, and Clifford's Row, and New Grosvenor Place being filled with a population of poor men, women, and children—striving, labouring men, working from hand to mouth, day by day, to sustain life. . . . Come with me into the lanes and streets of this great city. Come with me and visit the dens of infamy, and the haunts of vice, ignorance, filth, and atheism, with which it abounds. Come with me and read the story of Dives and Lazarus. Come with me and turn over the pages of the Holy Book, by whose precepts your lives are, at least, in theory guided. Then look at your noble houses, and the trappings of your equipages, the gold that glitters on your sideboards, and the jewels that gleam on your bosoms; then say within your secret conscience, as standing before the great and terrible God at the day of judgment, What shall I do if I give not of the one, to relieve the other?

Only one answer could be made to such words from a man who held the hearts of his parishioners in his hand—

in 1847 the first stone of St. Barnabas' Church was laid. On St. Barnabas' Day, 1850, it was consecrated by the Bishop of London, who up to this time was kind and cordial in every way, and Mr. Bennett took up his residence in the Clergy House adjoining the church, in order to live amongst the poor.

Of course, such an aggression on old days of sloth and negligence could not take place without a storm being aroused. As early as January, 1847, the Bishop wrote to Mr. Bennett, saying, "I send you a letter which I have received to-day. . . . I really fear that you are carrying things too far." The letter sent is too curious a specimen of the complaints made nearly forty years ago to be omitted.

Knightsbridge, January 7, 1847.

MY LORD BISHOP,

As a resident Protestant of Knightsbridge, and an attendant, with my numerous family, to (*sic*) St. Paul's Church, I have of late, with grief, witnessed those errors (as I conceive) in the simple rules laid down in our reformed Established Church, and which I am fearful would embue in my youthful family Romish doctrine. We have, for the present, withdrawn ourselves from attending the said church, and humbly implore your Lordship to cause a searching investigation to (*sic*) the unhappy practices there, ere I return with my family to St. Paul's.

I am, my Lord Bishop, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM ROBERTS.

To the Bishop of London.

"William Roberts" was vainly sought for among Mr. Bennett's parishioners, and his letter was probably one of many written under fictitious names with reference to St. Paul's.

But more powerful aid to the malcontents was at hand.

The publication of the Pope's Bull, dated September 24, 1850, endowing the Vicars Apostolic of the Roman Communion in England with sees and titles, raised a storm of popular indignation which broke over the heads of that party in the Church which had all along been accused, more or less, of favour towards the Church of Rome. Time has proved that the storm which seemed to shake all England was a mere passing scud, but all in authority were influenced by what they considered impending dangers. That the Bishop himself was alarmed as well as indignant, there can be no doubt, while the Lord Mayor at his feast, the Lord Chancellor his guest, counties and parishes in their meetings, all combined together, and fed the flame and catered to the popular will. Especially a letter from the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, to the Bishop of Durham, described a certain party in the Church of England in terms so bitter, so clever, and so plainly directed against the movement in his own parish, that it was pretty sure to draw down the worst of the storm on St. Barnabas' Church, its clergy, and congregation. And so it proved. On November 10, 1850, the "St. Barnabas' riots" broke out, an infuriated mob filling the church and ruling in the street. The police, the special constables, the entreaties of the congregation could not restrain or keep them off; while no word was said in deprecation of such scenes either by Prime Minister, Home Secretary, police magistrate, or Bishop. The latter yielded to the storm, and after a long correspondence with Mr. Bennett, in which he tried to induce him to take the same course, he wrote to him on November 27, saying that unless he could comply, *simpliciter* and *ex animo*, with certain requisitions, he must call

upon him to fulfil his offer of retiring from a charge which the Bishop thought he could not continue to hold without great injury to the Church.

It is impossible, even at this distance of time, to read without a burning heart the documents which give the story of those days, especially of the persevering, almost passionate, endeavours of the parishioners to retain the pastor who had gained their enthusiastic affection and confidence. A "committee of the poor" was formed to co-operate with the "general committee," and a letter of the parishioners, signed by Sir John Harington as chairman, was sent to the Bishop of London, in the third paragraph of which he was entreated to specify what he wished to be altered, omitted, or supplied in the services at St. Paul's and St. Barnabas'.

We ask for this information (the letter continued) because, considering the important interests which this removal of Mr. Bennett from this parish involves, we are determined, with the least possible delay, to take the best legal advice as to the means of trying in the Ecclesiastical Courts those questions for which your Lordship has pronounced Mr. Bennett to be "unfaithful to the Church of England."

The reply to the letter was as follows :—

Fulham Palace, January 16, 1851.

GENTLEMEN,

The Bishop of London has directed me to state, in answer to your letter of the 13th instant, addressed to him "on behalf of the parishioners, etc.," that he declines acceding to the request contained in the third paragraph of that letter.

I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,  
W. G. HUMPHREY.

Sir John E. Harington, Bart. ; J. H. Gibson, Esq.

Nor were the parishioners more successful in their entreaties to Mr. Bennett to delay his resignation until the charges brought against him could be tried before a lawful tribunal. He felt bound in honour to redeem the pledge which he had, perhaps hastily, given to the Bishop when chosen by him as Incumbent of St. Paul's, and on Lady Day, 1851, he resigned his charge and left St. Barnabas'.

The rivet that binds the resignation (he wrote to Sir John Harington) is *the Bishop's acceptance of it*, and *that*, in his episcopal judgment, *I am guilty of unfaithfulness to the Church of England*. . . . Although we may be forcibly separated from each other by what we cannot but consider an unjust decision of the Bishop, the memory of our struggle during the last few months for the freedom and privileges of our Church will never be erased from my memory.

Mr. Bennett was thus forced to lay down his arms in the very outset of an important struggle. What the final judgment of Englishmen has been in the matter may be seen in the present condition of the churches on which he was the first to leave his mark, and in that of thousands throughout the country which have been more or less influenced by the spirit and the work which he introduced into his parish. The Rev. and Hon. Robert Liddell was appointed as his successor. A few days before entering on his charge he wrote to Mr. Skinner :

Beckett Farringdon, March 20, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR,

Thank you very much for your most kind and most Christian letter. It is a source of deep thankfulness and consolation to me that I have been, by God's good providence, brought

into contact with one who will prove to me so valuable a coadjutor as yourself.

I need hardly add that I have, from the first moment of my acquaintance with you, fully purposed to place my first curacy at your disposal; and I pray that God in His goodness may restore you to your full strength. I will not on any account tax your physical strength at present, beyond what your medical man and your own feelings suggest as advisable. I shall have the aid of your mind. . . .

Believe me, my dear sir, very truly yours,

ROBERT LIDDELL.

The riots had continued through the winter, and were still in full force; but Mr. Skinner was by this time so much restored in health that he did not hesitate to accept a post in the very thick of the battle. He was longing to be at work again, and on Lady Day, 1851, he became Senior Curate of St. Barnabas'. The story of the next six years' battle, ended victoriously by the Privy Council judgment on March 21, 1857, has been briefly told in the *Life of Charles Lowder*. It was written exactly two years ago, in Mr. Skinner's house, gleaned from documents and letters collected by him in the midst of mortal weakness and suffering. They are still in the writer's possession, untouched, as when he left them; but the difficulty of going over the same ground, on different lines, is not lessened by the mournful liberty which death has given to those whom he loved and trusted. For he can no longer be appealed to for information; the ready help is gone, without which the story of his friend's life could not have been told, and there is no one left to do for him what he did for another.

Yet his life at St. Barnabas' cannot be passed over. We

cannot tell, while still walking amid the dim shadows of earth, what has been really the most important part of a man's work in this life. Only, from time to time, gleams from another world seem to show us that the very work and efforts of which he thought least himself, have been the most powerful "to work a wonder little meant," and that strength is never so perfected as in weakness.

But, humanly speaking, his work at this time was the most important part of the earthly task given to James Skinner; for St. Barnabas' was just then in the very forefront of the English Church's battle, both for freedom to worship God, and against the heathenism of London. If the fortress most fiercely attacked had not been, in spite of human failings, well and strongly held, the issue of the battle all along the lines must have been seriously changed.

The principle for which Mr. Skinner fought was freedom to use all those lawful aids to devotion which he found in existence at St. Barnabas', which the people earnestly desired, and which he found actually of important use in teaching the poor and ignorant. If he struggled with what might seem even extreme pertinacity for some detail, it was because he knew that to yield a number of small things for no better reason than a vain effort to allay popular outcry, was really to yield a great principle. He knew also what the effect would be on his congregation, since men do not work enthusiastically in irons. Much had to be learned, and has been learned, since the days when rekindled faith and reverence were seeking to find expression; but all the same, he fought a steadfast battle for law and Christian liberty. He carried out in action what Bishop Blomfield

had laid down in his Charge, that ritual "is the instrument by which she [the Church] seeks to realize and apply her doctrines;" and he contended against the spirit which then, as now, would fain forbid to clergymen and their congregations any expression of faith and reverence in excess of that measure which alone seemed reasonable to a certain number of Englishmen.

Writing to Mr. Liddell after a month's experience in his new post, he says—

If the work is to be done at all, it must be on some one distinct and complete principle, and by men whose energies are warmed by one common spirit.

For myself, I am willing to give myself and all I have unreservedly to the service of the Church in this district, but before I take the step of sacrificing all other prospects and positions, I must see my way onward a little in this; there must be some definite and decided understanding between yourself as incumbent of the parish, and me as the responsible curate of this section of it.

Our duty to our parishioners does not seem to concern us with what has gone before. The simple question is, Are *their accustomed privileges* in respect of the spiritual and material constitution of the Church of St. Barnabas within the law and order of the Book of Common Prayer? If they are not, cut them off; if they are, keep them up.

I cannot but think that upon such a general basis as this we might work on most successfully; and, with a clear and defensible principle before us, we should have a reasonable answer on every side to him that asked us.

To take an instance or two. First, in a material point. I will pass over the cross on the altar, which is not decided, but will shortly be settled probably, and the candlesticks, which are clearly decided; and I will take the change of coverings for the altar table. The Church has ordained variety of seasons, and the



commemoration of saints and martyrs. She evidently, therefore, *enjoins* us to teach their observance.

In this Church of St. Barnabas, the usage has been to turn the order about *a* covering for the altar into a lesson; not to make that order a mere form, but to allow nothing in the church which teaches nothing; to make the covering of the altar, therefore, carry to the eye the same lesson which the announcement of the minister before the sermon carries to the ear. The usage is nothing but the fulfilment of the Church's order through another sense which is very acute and susceptible, and, especially with the poor, capable of most valuable service.

When the poor of St. Barnabas', therefore, see a white covering on the altar, they remember that they are keeping some great feast connected with our Blessed Lord's life and history. When they see a red covering, they remember that they are commemorating some glorious martyrdom, or keeping a feast of the Holy Ghost. When the covering is green, they are reminded that the season is ordinary; when violet, that it is Lent; when black, that it is a funeral day, or the darkest day in the Church's year. Thus what looks so trivial a direction of the Church's law becomes a great help and remembrancer. We cannot afford to lose any helps to devotion. The most fervent among us are not fervent enough.

But the altar-cloths of St. Barnabas' have an interest over and above their usefulness. They have been offered solemnly to God—costly ornaments for His Board, for the use of a Free Church chiefly designed for the poor; deeply loved and valued, and prized with an honest pride, by the poor, and by all who worship with them. And the poor claim that their altar-cloths should not be set aside; that the same principle which allows their neighbours to have a change of cloth on Good Friday, should suffer *their* privilege of a change on Easter Day to be continued to them.

Now take the service. Is the choral mode a lawful mode, or is it not?

The usage of St. Barnabas' Church is choral. The use of it in the mother churches of the country proves it to be our Church's highest standard of worship. The people here have

been trained to that highest standard, and they claim to keep where they have been trained. They claim not to be forced back.

It would be almost wicked in us, were it not impossible for us, to attempt to stop this fervour and love of a warm and real and hearty service to God. We may raise people's minds upwards and onward, but we can never without danger drive them backward and downward.

I would act in stern and uncompromising fidelity to the Church's law. I would discountenance anything and everything which savoured of unfaithfulness in the remotest measure to the plain will of the Book of Common Prayer, and I would keep in wholesome check through the pulpit all fervid and haply morbid imaginations. But I would bear in mind that there will be always more danger of false tones and forms of mind where there is no vent afforded for every true and loyal and right and healthy feeling. For myself, I am at your service. But I must know for certain on what principle we are to work. For though I could go to-morrow and work *upward* within the simplest cabin as a missionary 'mid an untrained multitude, without the comforts of a beautiful church or rich chancel or choral service, I could not work a day *downward* in such a district as this, where my first labour must needs be to unteach the people the lesson of love and obedience to the Prayer-Book which they have learnt so well. The same line which would deter me from *beginning* choral service, or altar-cloths, or surplice, or anything out of usage in any other parish, would compel me to keep them here, where the true and highest standard of our Church's law and practice has been established, and is fixed in the hearts of the congregation.

This long letter has been given because it lays down, in Mr. Skinner's own words, the lines upon which he fought ; and it is not unprofitable to review the grounds of our position, even now when those things are common in most churches which at St. Barnabas aroused such fury amongst the mob that order was only preserved during divine service

by keeping a large body of gentlemen on the roll of sworn special constables; some of whom were posted Sunday after Sunday by the chancel gates to prevent the ring-leaders from breaking into the choir. Mr. Liddell's wish was to remove the occasion for some of the outcry by suppressing all practices at St. Barnabas' which exceeded those in use at the mother church. In a letter to the Rev. H. Montagu Villiers, ended but a few days before his death, Mr. Skinner says—

The deliberate choice of Mr. Liddell, after fifteen years at Barking, to fill the post from which, in plain terms, Mr. Bennett was dismissed, is ample evidence on the Bishop's part, not only of the personal regard, but of the estimate, as to concessions to the episcopal view of the difficulties of the position, with which the new incumbent was credited at London House. It need hardly be said, therefore, that when he entered upon the charge of SS. Paul and Barnabas in March, 1851, at a time of intense anxiety and distress in the parish, as well as of politico-religious excitement in the country, he came blessed, and not a little embarrassed, by the confidence of Bishop Blomfield, whom from his boyhood he had learnt to love and admire. . . .

The battle which began in 1850 was fought for the *principle* of rites and ceremonies in public worship. . . .

The policy of the Bishop and, so far as they went, his instructions to Mr. Liddell were on the side of suppression, even in things so obviously reasonable as choral service and the beautifying of the holy place with flowers at high festivals; and if Mr. Liddell had been an instrument in his diocesan's hands, he might very soon have effected the obliteration of Mr. Bennett's work, to the general discontent, not of a party, but of the parish all round. But his attitude being invariably like Orlando's in "As You Like It,"

"Let gentleness my strong enforcement be "

he tided over each difficulty as it arose, and *eventually* overcame it. . . .

I well remember his first opposition to my own administration as his "Lieutenant" (so he always kindly called me) at St. Barnabas'; and, as it illustrates his general line of loving generosity, I will record it fully.

When we took up our charge in the middle of Lent, 1851, the altars of the two churches were vested in violet. But, when Easter arrived, the vestment had to be changed, and the question arose to what colour. The Bishop had instructed the new incumbent to go back to the uniformity of a red cloth for all seasons alike; and his resolution to do so at St. Paul's was finally made. But the circumstances at St. Barnabas' were, I ventured to think, so different that I pleaded for our liberty to act independently;—and the more because the priest in charge there had never been brought under any pledges to the Bishop.

A complete set of the various altar vestments suited to the seasons had been solemnly offered and accepted by the faithful, and the red one, not being plain, but specially designed for Whitsuntide and Martyrs' Days, with the proper symbols upon it, could not possibly be used at Easter without an impropriety which would look nothing short of absurd. I therefore entreated to be allowed to put on the proper covering of white, in exchange for violet, if any change was to be made at all. Four or five times in the course of that Holy Week I had to return unsuccessful from the charge; the incumbent had undertaken to the Bishop to go back to the plain red covering, and what he should do at St. Paul's *must* be done at St. Barnabas'.

Within ten minutes of beginning our first Evensong for Easter on Saturday night, I made one last effort, which was effectual for us, thank God, without shaking the consistency of Mr. Liddell. "Well, my dear Skinner," he concluded, "I must *leave* it to your discretion." "Thank you," I replied. "I hope I am not abusing your generosity, but my mind is made up; our altar shall wear the white."

Mr. Liddell's generosity also gave Mr. Skinner the power of choosing the men who were to work with him at

St. Barnabas'. He writes, in answer to the first letter he ever received from Mr. Lowder :

Parsonage House, St. Barnabas', Pimlico, June 18, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR,

I ought much sooner to have replied to your most excellent letter, of date St. Barnabas' Day ; but pressure of engagements of a very engrossing kind must plead my excuse.

I am the advertiser A. B., and the position which I hold, and in which assistance is required, is the senior and responsible curate of this very important and delicate charge of St. Barnabas', Pimlico.

Mr. Liddell, the incumbent, is resident in the upper part of the parish, and, devoting himself mainly to St. Paul's, Wilton Place, is kind enough to commit the management of this district to me.

I am anxious to work out the great objects which Mr. Bennett had at heart, and for which such rare appliances are by him bequeathed to our hands ; and for this purpose, I regard as first and foremost that combination of energetic counsel and unity of action which alone the collegiate life enables us to supply.

Both Mr. Liddell and myself are much pleased alike with the substance and the tone of your letter, and we cannot but lean to the hope that in such a one as yourself we should find a fellow-workman of like mind, whose zeal, and piety, and earnestness would comfort and cheer our hearts, and bring blessing upon our work. . . .

It would greatly facilitate our negotiation, could you make it convenient to call on me here on an early day, and if, meantime, you would turn over in your mind one or two points, about which we might have further converse when we meet. . . .

If you are in town and could so come down here as to enable me to have the benefit of your help on Sunday next, in the morning service, I shall be much pleased.

Meantime, believe me to be, dear sir,

Your very faithful brother,

J<sup>A</sup>. SKINNER.

The Rev. C. F. Lowder.

St. Barnabas' Parsonage, July 8, 1851.

MY DEAR MR. LOWDER,

Pressure of work has alone hindered me from saying how much I thank and bless you for your truly Christian and most delightful letter. My heart quite warms towards you as I read your earnest words of zeal for the work which lies before us in poor St. Barnabas'. I see also a humble spirit of faith and love and meekness, from which I anticipate not only God's blessing on your exertions here, but a lesson for myself, which I trust I shall have grace to learn.

I hope you will bear with my many infirmities, and not be discouraged by the proofs which you will probably discover of the sad measure in which I fall behind you in almost everything. One source of unspeakable comfort is, the entire congeniality of sentiment which I know exists between us. If we work and pray and strive together, surely we shall not miss the aim of our labours. May God be with us.

Mr. Poole has arrived, and is now with us—a very nice, quiet, earnest, right-minded young man.

And now, my dear brother, when can you come to us? I am yearning to have you at once, for we cannot set our machinery on foot, or attain that method or coherence in our plans which is essential to their success, till we get our staff together, and I want your counsel in many things. . . .

Ever affectionately yours,

J.A. SKINNER.

Rev. C. F. Lowder.

Mr. Lowder came into residence at St. Barnabas' in September of the same year. One wing of the college had been built for the assistant clergy, containing a sitting-room and bedroom for each. There was a common dining-room for all, including the senior curate and his family, and Mr. Lowder speedily became the favourite playmate of the little daughter of the house and of her cousins.

He was always up to some fun and mischief (one of them has said, in recalling those days). We used to play in a court upon which his rooms looked, and one day I remember his calling to us from his window, and when we rushed over expecting sugar-plums, we received instead a gentle shower from a watering-pot. We were, of course, in shrieks of delight at the joke, which is more than our nurse was.

The clergy of St. Barnabas' had more than enough to do in their work amongst the poor around the church, which had been specially built for the poor, without hindrances thrown in their way by attacks and misrepresentations on all sides. Letters in the *Times*, headed "The Holy War of Belgravia," stated that the service at St. Barnabas' was "in exact imitation of the ceremonial of Roman Catholics, less the bells and the incense." \* Nor were there those wanting, even among so-called High Church clergymen, who, disapproving of anything not precisely on the model which they had set up for themselves, were forward to bring what they disliked before the Bishops. These private representations and misrepresentations had their effect, and were the source of endless difficulty and trouble to Mr. Skinner and his co-curates. It is certainly curious, at this time, to find the Rev. J. W. Burgon vehemently protesting against such practices as "holding up your hand in the air while you pronounce the Benediction," the eastward position, and the vergers wearing cassocks, as being "unauthorized innovations or worse," and as "savouring more of Rome than of England." The following statement in a leading article of the *Morning Post* of July 20, 1851, shows how absolutely without reasonable cause was the storm raging just then around St. Barnabas':—

\* The *Times*, July 14, 1851.

The opponents of these things have sought to bring them into popular hatred, by calling them "Popery." Now *this*, at all events, is something more than an exaggeration—it is an error—a delusion, and the propagation of it works a great injustice. For whether the practices objected to be right or wrong, excusable or inexcusable, they certainly do not constitute Popery, and he must have a very light and trivial, not to say ignorant, notion of the tremendous evil of Popery who allows himself to think that a manner of worship and prayer not forbidden by the Church of England is to be identified with that system of error against which the Church of England so vehemently protests. That such services as are objected to in certain churches of the parish of St. George's, Hanover Square, are not forbidden by the Church of England appears from the directions of the Prayer-Book, which command the Litany and all the Creeds to be either sung or said, plainly allowing a choice between the two; and, indeed, the services objected to do not differ from the usual services in English cathedrals, except in the more frequent celebration of the Communion, in the frequent collection of alms (at St. Barnabas'), even when there is not a Communion, and a far more energetic, earnest, emphatic manner on the part of the clergy and the congregation than is usual in our cathedrals.

The church and college (to quote a few words from the Life of Charles Lowder) were in a difficult and anomalous position; not independent as now, but legally a chapel-of-ease to St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, served by curates, under its incumbent, while its whole constitution and *raison d'être* tended to force the clergy who ministered there into an independent course of action.

Besides this, both Mr. Liddell and his lieutenant at St. Barnabas' worked under considerable pressure, of different kinds—the latter from the congregation, who demanded that he should guard the lawful liberty which they had made up their minds to preserve; the former from his Bishop, from a



large number of his congregation, and from other powerful influences brought to bear upon him. He wrote to Mr. Skinner in March, 1852, laying down twelve points in which customs at St. Barnabas' were to be changed. "My object in them," he wrote, "is to assimilate the services at St. Barnabas' as closely as possible to those at St. Paul's."

A long correspondence followed, full of entreaties, on the part of Mr. Skinner and Mr. Lowder especially, that their people might be left to the free exercise of customs which had become dear to them. For amongst things prohibited were, chanting the *Sanctus* and *Gloria in excelsis*, the clergy and choir turning to the east at the *Gloria*, and the placing of flowers at any season upon the altar. Mr. Skinner writes to Mr. Liddell on March 10, 1852 :

. . . The principle upon which I avowed my intention to act in this post . . . which I drew out at the time in writing, and to which you signified your assent, was this : all change, for change's sake, is evil. We proceeded, as soon as we knew our definite line, to act out this principle. Wherever positive duty to the Church of England did not require a change in the manner of conducting the services of St. Barnabas', we agreed to conduct them as they had been from the beginning.

The service here is conducted now exactly as you have seen it conducted, and as you have conducted it yourself. . . .

I wish with all my heart that I did not seem to be at variance with you on this subject. You will believe me when I say that it is with the greatest pain that I am compelled, by a sense of duty, to entreat you to leave us as we are. You ask us to change certain things which never yet have been changed. And for what gain? No principle is attained by the sacrifice, and a very intelligible principle is lost : and what will be its effect?

As to any change in the Communion Service; I cannot believe that you wish us to undo every advance to method and

coherency, to which, with much pains and care, we have but just arrived. . . .

The only consistent thing, short of our *present* rule, would be to give up the whole choral service, and have the old reading type restored.

You wish my difference with you, if any, to be submitted to the Bishop. I heartily pray it may not have come to such an issue yet. You know full well as I the result of the Bishop's arbitration, and that he would gladly seize any opportunity, which he would be the last to *invile*, to overthrow our whole work in this place, and commit it to other direction. And this I say with all duty and respect for the Bishop, who has different *private* views of the ritual of the Church from ourselves, but who has no wish to *force* those views on others.

Yet if you give him the opportunity, he will not be slow to improve it. I have too high a sense of your fairness and generosity, however, to suppose for an instant that you are now resolved to force us back from the ground we have already gained, and which you yourself have helped us to win ; or, in other words, that you will be willing to run the risk of overturning the work which God has hitherto prospered in our hands.

We trust we are acting out of no self-will, but solely from a deep sense of duty, gathered from a close and intimate connection with our people, in this declaration of our determination, God helping us, to stand or fall with their and our own rightful claim to have continued to us, unimpaired, the blessings of God's worship in its external type and inward beauty, with which *now* He has been pleased to gift us.

I can answer to God we have but one single aim—to strengthen the foundations of the Church of England in the hearts of our people, and to bring forth true, loyal, and loving fruits of patience and faith from the principles in which they have been trained. These principles may be, in some sort, different from those held by many of your excellent people at St. Paul's ; they may take a larger and wider view of Church membership, and recognize deep spiritual things where others see only empty and

barren forms : but these principles of the St. Barnabas' people are not *therefore* wrong, because they are not precisely the same as the principles of the St. Paul's people. And I would earnestly hope that we who are called to minister to *both* may, by God's grace, build up *both* in the true faith and fear of God, without cramping ourselves, and embarrassing and perplexing consciences with positive unalterable laws of uniformity, which will infallibly offend both, and hinder our work for their souls.

In reply, Mr. Liddell writes :—

March 11, 1852.

Let me hasten, my dear and truly valued friend, to relieve your mind of needless pain.

What I have *said* to you in all our intercourse, that I have *meant*. I love you for your earnestness, I value you for your ability, and I know not now where I could have found a man, on the whole, so well qualified as yourself for the post which you fill. But this does not imply that I think we are identical in *all* matters of opinion, and that you may not see some things with a higher amount of mental and spiritual colouring than I do.

The very circumstance of my always coming straight to you to consult about measures, shows that I consider you my head and responsible curate—my lieutenant—and I believe it is most for the welfare of the parish that I should, in all ordinary matters, leave you as free as possible.

But there are things in which my parishioners, the Church at large, and our diocesan will and must hold *me*, not *you*, responsible, and in these, as now, I must act to the best of my own judgment. As to the Bishop who placed me here, I *owe* it to him to satisfy his mind, to the utmost of my power, upon all points connected with the parish. I do not expect to be *able* to satisfy him entirely; but I feel that, at any rate, the only way for me to maintain my present position is to be able to assert that, barring the difference of the choral service, the usages of the two churches under my care are the same.

A few days later, Mr. Skinner writes to Mr. Liddell :

I am most grateful to you for your kind note ; and the kind terms of it to myself personally are just what I knew you would be forward to express if you felt them. They greatly relieve my mind.

You judged most wisely, I think, that there could, and that there ought to be no strict uniformity between two churches, the very design of which most certainly was that they should be adapted to two very different and distinct classes of mind, equally held, thank God, within the pale of the English Church.

I feel strongly that the Church at large, the parish, and the Bishop look to *you* and not to *me*. I feel also strongly that you must act to the best of your own judgment.

Forgive me, if I have seemed to allow my earnest desire to express myself clearly to outrun the measure of deference and respect which I most heartily feel for you, and most earnestly desire to show.

We do most earnestly desire to be an abiding help and comfort to you ; but we should cease to be that comfort if we yielded our conscientious sense of its first and most necessary ingredient—a firm and persevering adherence to *the one* line of administration upon which we set out, and which hitherto God has been pleased to bless. We earnestly pray that you will be induced to consider our sincere and hearty desire to go on as we have begun.

36, Wilton Crescent, Saturday night, March 13.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

I fear I gave you distress in my conversation to-day, and as I know that a loving word is never thrown away upon a loving heart, I write a brief note to beseech you not to suppose that I can for one moment forget the self-denying zeal and devotion which you and your fellow-labourers are displaying day and night in every portion of your ministerial work. Believe me, I do appreciate it thoroughly ; and it is my desire to uphold you in all essential matters, which prompts me to avoid all possible dis-

crepancies between our respective churches in non-essentials.  
God bless you all.

Believe me, my dear Skinner,  
Your affectionate brother in Christ,  
ROBERT LIDDELL.

The notes which follow, from the present venerable Vicar of Frome, are interesting, especially now that in his new parish he has overcome all opposition, and peacefully carried out far more than he ever attempted to introduce in his London parish.

32, Connaught Square, Whit-Monday, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR,

My intention was to call on you before I departed, but I have been so hindered by a multitude of troubles and arrangements necessarily attending my departure. May God's blessing be with you in your works, and may you have grace to perfect the work which it pleased God to permit me only to begin.

I have planted, you must water, and God will give the increase—and He alone.

I shall be far away in Germany on St. Barnabas' Day, but I shall worship somewhere in the great fold of the Catholic Church, and my prayers will go up for the poor of St. Barnabas'—never to be forgotten. If you have an opportunity, tell them so. Peace be with them.

Yours faithfully,  
WM. J. E. BENNETT.

The Annunciation, 1852.

MY DEAR MR. SKINNER,

This is, as you know, the anniversary of my departure from St. Barnabas'. I am come to communicate with you this morning, to express my thankfulness to God for the preservation of so much to the Church through Mr. Liddell's and your means, and to pray my intercessional prayer at the altar where once I

ministered, that it may be put into the heart of Mr. Liddell and yourself still to go on in wisdom and meekness in the path already begun ; so that by-and-by—not for either one or other of *us*, but for the Church and poor—Christ's kingdom may prevail.

My faith is, even yet, that the time will come when greater light than as yet we see will be vouchsafed to all of us, and while some go on in zeal and suffer, others will be melted and turn to the Church, whose love and faith they yet know not. But the abandonment of *self* is the principle. I feel that I, for my part, have failed most miserably in this. May God forgive in me all that is past, and direct me better at Frome. I feel sure I may ask your prayers in return for my guidance there, for there is much that is full of fear to me.

Bishop Blomfield was also assailed by petitions against the worship at St. Barnabas', from those who had nothing whatever to do with it. The character of some of these petitions may be gathered from the following letter :—

St. Barnabas', March 15, 1852.

MY DEAR MR. LIDDELL,

I have made it a duty to institute every inquiry about the persons who have signed the petition to the Bishop, and I hope you will press upon his lordship how very far from worthy such fifteen names are to represent in any sense whatever the feeling of the St. Barnabas' district and congregation. They are a few petty tradespeople, living in one street, almost adjoining each other, who from the very beginning have steadily set themselves to oppose the Church. They are the very same individuals who instigated the former disturbances at St. Barnabas', and whom the complete uprooting of our entire work would alone satisfy.

The great majority of them are persons of Dissenting opinions in religion, who are either formally joined to some sect or other, or who frequent habitually the worship of the meeting-house. They are none of them frequenters of St. Barnabas'. They are persons on whom the burden and weight of religious responsibili-

ties cannot possibly bear with all the force they would represent, for they are precisely the very persons who make Grosvenor Road a disgrace to our district.

I earnestly trust the Bishop will not suffer our work to be disturbed on such testimony, or the great body of witnesses which *might* be called on the other side to be overlooked. I take this opportunity also of saying that I hope you will assure his lordship of the very sincere desire by which we are actuated of discharging our duty in this place, within the plain law of the Church of England, and according to the truest loyalty and love.

I have just learned that of *eleven* shopkeepers who have signed the petition, *eight* keep their shops open on Sunday. It is also worthy of notice that although this petition has *courted* signatures, there are none of the most respectable Dissenters even who have given their names.

Believe me, my dear Mr. Liddell,

Your faithful brother in Christ,

J. A. SKINNER.

"I shall be ready to receive you and the Bishop at three," Mr. Skinner writes on March 15. The result of the Bishop's visit has been told in Mr. Lowder's Life, and need not here be repeated,\* especially as orders issued without regard to authority could, in their nature, have but a transitory effect. The same may be said of the changes enjoined by Mr. Liddell, although for a time most of them were complied with ; for in the end it was the services at St. Paul's which, in respect of every point in dispute, became assimilated to those of St. Barnabas'. Of another representation made to the Bishop, Mr. Liddell writes on June 28, 1852 :—

... I told him how impertinent we thought it, but that we should of course pay deference to any communications from him.

\* See "Charles Lowder : a Biography," p. 37.

self if he thought fit to notice such fellows ; that we *courted publicity*, and that you would be glad to go to him and give him full information upon any charges brought against St. Barnabas'. Also, that we were sure it was nothing but an election trick. I hope he will snub them, but I think a bold front is all we have to show.

To Bishop Blomfield Mr. Skinner writes on July 15 in reference to two points mentioned by the Bishop in an interview with him that morning, and concludes his letter thus :

I hope your lordship will forgive me for troubling you with this explanation, and also for adding that there is too good reason to fear that any adjustment of these two points to whatever form would still leave where they are the objections of those who persistently memorialize your lordship against us. The objection is to our *work as a whole*, the success of which, by God's blessing, has made itself seen and felt in the numerous assemblies of devoted daily worshippers, in the constancy and frequency of attendance at the Lord's Table, and in the deepening growth amongst us of penitence and true religion ; facts to which, if your lordship pleased, most willing and ready witnesses might be called.

Some of the details of the battle for liberty in 1852 have been given because it was the beginning of a struggle of which we are far from seeing the end, or being able to estimate the importance. Mr. Skinner wrote himself, on his deathbed :

Those of us who remember the early dawn of "the Oxford movement," in 1832-3, have no difficulty in recognizing two distinct stages in its course ; the first devoted to *dogma*, or the explicit statement of facts and doctrines ; the second, to the application of fixed theological principles to the practice of morals and public worship. The first stage may be said to have already passed into the second, as early as 1842, when Bishop Blomfield delivered the



celebrated charge which revived the long-forgotten claims of the Rubrical Law of the English Prayer-Book upon the obedience of the clergy. But this preliminary passage received a formidable check, through the rebellion of the Islington clergy, who compelled the Bishop to recede from his position ; and it is, therefore, probably, more correct to say that in 1850, with the consecration of St. Barnabas', Pimlico, a chapel within the parish of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, commenced the second stage of that wonderful movement which is still in its full vigour of reviving the spiritual life of the Church of England.\*

To him, for a brief season, was committed the leadership of this second stage of the movement, and he held it with invincible courage and fidelity. He brought to the work a naturally strong will ; and men complained at times that he was too stern and unbending. It may have been so ; he spoke strongly in his latter days to an intimate friend of the "dominant passion to have our own estimate of truth asserted," as though it were one of which he had felt the force. Yet the world knew little of the tenderness that was combined with an iron will, or of how "a soft answer" could in a moment turn his most eager moods into gentleness.

Private sorrows and anxieties also weighed heavily upon him at this time. In January his wife's eldest sister died,—doubly dear to him through her marriage with his own brother. He writes to her mother :

•  
Chipperfield House, January 26, 1852.

MY EVER DEAREST MOTHER,

You have often said that I had the power, through God's grace, of soothing and comforting those who mourn. I have never thought so myself, except that it has been that out of my weakness God has been pleased to bring strength to those who

\* Letter to Rev. H. Montagu Villiers.

have looked simply to Him. However this may be, to none do I owe all the comfort I can speak, after my poor dear sorrowing widowed brother, more freely than to yourself, the mother of our departed darling ; and this I owe, dearest, not more out of the tender ties which bound you to your child, than out of the deep unfeigned love I bear you yourself.

Alas ! alas ! how little do we know the future ! and how well it is for us that so God should order His blessed will ! And yet our poor weak, faithless hearts keep desiring issues for themselves ; hoping, and fearing, and doubting, and distracting themselves, as if we *dared* not trust *our all* with Him Who loves us, and would only save us from sin and from ourselves ! How much this has been the case throughout our beloved Margareta's sickness ! How faithlessly have we longed and prayed for *other* results than that which it has pleased God to bring about ! The weakness of flesh and blood may well excuse this infirmity ; but how shall we stand excused now that God has spoken, if we do not bow to His Almighty Will, and kiss the rod of love wherewith He smites us ! Oh, my beloved mother, what mercy and compassion and pity of our gracious Father, through His Beloved Son, may we not discern in the midst of this deep and piercing sorrow ! There is no passage of her guileless life which will not bear our thinking happily upon : her child-like innocence of will ; her unspeakable strength of faith in Him who died for her, and all the blessedness of grace which He provided in His Church ; her anxiety to do right, to bring up her children well, to guard the spiritual life of her servants and dependents, to do her duty to George, whom she loved with an angel's love. She never thought of herself but as one that had done little and had much to learn.

I know your dear anxious heart will also be comforted at what remains to be told. You know how deep rooted has ever been the affection between all our mutual relations in the double tie which has ever made us one family rather than two. We have felt therefore that her spirit will rejoice over the knowledge (if it be permitted) that henceforth we shall indeed be one household and one family, living under the same roof, and training up our children

under the shadow of that temple of God's house, whither His Providence hath guided me.

Last year at this time, when no thoughts of this affliction were present, I was myself an outcast as it were, without home in this world, and all but summoned off to another. Now, God smites in another direction ; and while with one hand He takes away, with the other He raises up a home, and an affectionate heart to fill a mother's place ; and, above all, a full and gracious supply of all the means of grace and blessing whereby we may learn to make a heaven on earth, and live in close communion with the spirits above !

We have abundant room at St. Barnabas' to take in the three children, and to give George rooms for himself, where he can carry on his business with half the wear and tear to his body, and see his pets cared for with less anxiety to his mind.

May God grant us also the comfort of deep and lasting profit to our souls, long, long after the burden of His Hand shall have passed away ! This, after all, will be the *real* comfort, that we have been now closer to God's side, and taken more completely out of our wicked selves !

Meantime, dearest mother, let us send on, together with our sainted treasure, messengers to view the country which God will give us—our faith in believing ; our hope in expecting ; our love in obeying. Oh, will not these messengers bring back to us the blessed word that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" ?

A still greater sorrow threatened him in his wife's long and dangerous illness. The loss of her sister told severely on her health, and in Lent of this year she was sent to St. Leonard's-on-Sea, where she became so dangerously ill, that a telegram was sent to Mr. Skinner on Good Friday morning, summoning him, as it was thought, to her death-bed. He could not set out at once, but was

forced to take his part in the services of the day, and to preach. When he arrived at St. Leonard's the same evening, there seemed small hope of her life, and though the severity of her illness gradually abated, she continued an invalid for more than a year. All this anxiety made the continued worry of complaints against him to the Bishop the more trying. Writing of one of these, Mr. Liddell says—

September 3, 1852.

I am only thankful, my dear Skinner, that those who are watching for our halting cannot attack us upon any more important matters; and the longer we can go on steadily endeavouring to develop the mind of the Church, the more we shall rivet the affections of all candid and devout Church-people, and discern the opposition of such ignorant meddlers as the St. George's Vestry. Pray write me a line to tell me how you and Mrs. Skinner are. I presume that she has ere this gone down to her father in Essex. I expect to be back at home by the end of the month.

A few days later, Lord Richard Cavendish writes :

Compton Place, Eastbourne, September 15, 1852.

MY DEAR MR. SKINNER,

Your letter has grieved me deeply on your account. Most sincerely do I sympathize with you in this most trying affliction which it pleases God to send on you. I had hoped from what I last had heard of Mrs. Skinner that she was much better. May God grant you a merciful answer to your prayers for her, even although it be not in the way which you would naturally most desire. It is sad, too, with such a constant trial pressing upon you, to have all the misery of this wretched struggle with the Bishop, to whom you ought to be able to look for your principal support. It is most needful that a stand should be made against the unlawful commands of a Bishop issued merely in the vain

hope of "satisfying a public" who will never be satisfied with anything short of the abolition of all Catholic doctrine and worship in the English Church. The notion of your having on any account to leave St. Barnabas' fills me with dismay. I dare not think of it. I can only say, may God be merciful to us!

I wish I could hope to hear better news of Mrs. Skinner. What I can do to help you in your present straits I will, and that is to remember you daily in my prayers.

Ever, my dear Mr. Skinner, yours,

RICHARD CAVENDISH.

## CHAPTER VI.

### LETTERS OF SPIRITUAL COUNSEL.

*“Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim.”*

THAT which the world saw at St. Barnabas', and either attacked or valued, was perhaps but a small part of the work for souls which went on, silently though without concealment or mystery, increasing year by year. It was at this time that Mr. Skinner was called on to minister largely to individuals whom his preaching had first attracted and then roused. Henceforward, to the end of his life, the teaching and training of minds and souls “requiring” at his hands “counsel and comfort” formed a considerable part of his work. Some of the letters addressed to those whom he thus taught have been kindly given, in the hope of others gaining help or comfort from them, although, for obvious reasons, dates are omitted. And this prayer was also written during his early days at St. Barnabas':—

O most gracious Jesu, Who art the Author of all grace, and Who alone workest through the means of grace vouchsafed to us in Thy Church, I humbly beseech Thee that, as Thou hast been pleased to consign to me, Thy deeply unworthy servant, the awful power of binding and loosing in Thy Name, thou wilt graciously vouchsafe me such a measure of holiness and purity, as may

enable me to discharge this high office as becometh Thy priest and ambassador for souls.

O, let there be in me a heart of faith and chastity, that while I minister Thy cleansing to the uncleanness of others, I may not myself contract the least spot or stain of sin. Let there be in me a burning desire for the salvation of souls for which Thou hast poured out Thy blood, and a clear and full estimate of the horrible loss and gain which they sustain who lose heaven and gain hell. O, let there be in me the sweetness of a good father, the gentleness and skill of a good physician, and the loving care of a tender shepherd. Grant that I may be enabled to soothe the afflicted, to illuminate the blinded, to speak peace to the disturbed, to assure the timid, to strengthen the falling, to stimulate the slothful, to establish the weak, to heal the sick in soul, and to counsel each of Thy people according to his or her need. Grant that I may be able to persuade each of the great things which pertain to the soul. And, O most loving Jesu, give me a deep sense of my own vileness and unworthiness, that to those who come here to be absolved by the power of Thy high authority, I may yield an ear of earnest attention and patience, and a heart of love and purity and true sympathy; seeing that I also am tempted, and that sin is the common curse of man.

These things I earnestly beseech Thee to grant for the sake of those merits whereby Thou hast gained peace and pardon and all things, O holy Jesu.

To —.

Differences of opinion among those whom you respect are entirely compatible with a fixed unity of principle binding all in common to one most holy faith. And the circumstance that the clergy are not in all details agreed among themselves, so far from relaxing your hold upon the positive teaching of the Church of England in the Prayer-Book, should rather serve to rivet it more closely. For whatever men may say or think about the statements of the Prayer-Book, there the statements are, to be judged by the common sense of every one; and the variety of judgments

*about* those statements—their force and application in detail, their bearing upon other statements, and the like—is just the token which one would look for and expect of healthy freedom in this free country of ours.

No doubt there is another state of things in countries where obedience to the Pope is the highest law of conscience. But I leave you to say which of the two is the greater wrong to a Christian's moral sense—to force and compel an absolute agreement not only about essential doctrine, but about all the details in which that doctrine is concerned ; or, to state plainly and unequivocally great principles of truth, as the English Church does, and to leave her members free to apply those principles to themselves, as the judgment and conscience of each shall suggest.

The difference between two such conditions of things is just the difference between an artificial and an unnatural, and therefore an unreal state, and a natural and real state. You mention Mr. Neale's writings on the subject of confession. Well, it is just as natural and real for Mr. N. to apply his view of the Church's truth about confession, as it is for your father, or for Mr. A. or Mr. B., each to apply theirs. But it would be very unreal and unnatural if all these gentlemen were compelled to hold the same views *exactly* about the use and application of confession, whether they really and honestly did so or not. And yet all of them *do* hold the great broad principle set forth in the Prayer-Book, that confession is a lawful and charitable provision for sin-sick souls.

And I would have you reason in the same way on the subjects about which the clergy differ. It is better that they should differ honestly and naturally, as the constitution of all human minds requires, than that they should agree dishonestly and unnaturally, so long as the great essential truths laid down by the Church are held in common.

God has given each of us the responsibility of using our faculties of judging—both our intellectual and our spiritual faculties. But if in all details we were *forced* to think alike, there would be no room for exercising this responsibility at all.



And now I will leave this part of the subject. I beg you to read what I have just written in connection with my last letter, in which I specially considered your father's particular sentiments on the subject of confession as offering no just cause on your part, even though you do not feel exactly with him, for withholding from him the confidence which he deserves to receive, and which your own filial heart prompts you to give.

## TO THE SAME.

In your case I do not advise confession at all for the present.

And here I will add . . . that your duty is now plainly to put away from you all subjects of controversy and difference of opinion. Satisfy yourself once for all that truth is one thing and opinion is another thing. There can be no division in truth, which is absolutely one, though every truth has many sides. But opinion may be diverse without being wrong, and as long as there are many men in the world, there must and will be many minds. It is the province of charity—the great cardinal grace of the gospel—to harmonize these two absolute facts, which never *can* cease to co-exist—the oneness of truth, and the multiplicity of opinions. It is clearly a snare to you to allow your mind to dwell unduly on this apparent paradox, to which only love can reconcile you. Cast the thought of it aside, and love will do her work for you all the better. Curious questions may puzzle every man, but they will profit no man; meanwhile they bring sure trouble with them, unsettling and disturbing consciences which they neither profit nor instruct. And what if you do err in that which is doubtful and obscure? There can be no sin in it, unless it be in a subject which you plainly understand.

## TO THE SAME.

I ought not to say that your last letter disappoints me, because it only confirms the impression which I have formed of your case, and tried to describe to you. You are still repeating forms of complaint against yourself which I have traced to their proper

source, and you are investing them still with that same colour of hopeless despair which your better judgment has already pronounced a delusion. There needs no stronger proof of the morbid state of your imagination.

I will not pause, therefore, to go over again the same ground. . . . I retain my opinion that formal confession would not be an advantage to you just now. It would only create evil. It is much safer for you to write freely to me about yourself as difficulties arise. The irritability and discontent of which you complain may, of course, become wilful sin, if you encourage it, or do not resist it; and then, with any other special sins indulged in like manner, it might become a fit subject for special confession. . . . But meantime I advise you to go on making your self-examination and confession before God in the ordinary way of devotion, and frequenting the Holy Communion with the general intention of beseeching His grace, and such special intentions as I suggest according to your special needs from time to time.

To —.

If your parents determine, at all risks, to hinder you from consulting an English priest of the Church of Christ in which you were baptized, in the troubles which beset you, they must be prepared to bear the responsibility of all the consequences in time and in eternity.

As they already know, I will be no party to your *secretly* coming to me.

I would entreat them to take the part of charity and of common sense, and to leave a person, at your age, free to act, according to your light, in the things which concern only God and yourself.

But, if otherwise, while I am not at liberty to decline to help you if you resort to me for medicine to your soul, I am not at liberty to receive you without their knowledge, though, if it *must* be so, without their consent.

Will you make this clear to your parents, with my respects?

To —.

There is nothing more simple than the law of the spiritual life concerning sin. First, we must be *convicted* of our sin, looking at it always, not from our own point of view, but from God's ; judging ourselves as we know the All Holy judges. Of course, unless the Holy Spirit helps us to this conviction, we cannot have it, of ourselves, and without earnestly asking to have it, through the Holy Spirit. Next, we must have *contrition* for the sin which we know in ourselves, and have been convicted of by the Holy Ghost. That is, our hearts must be wounded with true sorrow and grief for having separated ourselves from God, and outraged His love, which is so great for us, by disobeying Him and opposing ourselves to His will. Of course, also, unless the Holy Spirit helps us to this contrition, we cannot have it : we cannot *make ourselves* have sorrow by an effort of our own. He gives us this sorrow if we ask really to have it ; and then He accepts His own gift, when we offer it back to Him in confession, and gives us the greater gift of pardon in return. There can be *no* pardon, conveyed by absolution, where there is no contrition in the penitent. Confession is essential to penitence,\* but contrition is essential to confession ; so that without contrition there is neither penitence nor pardon.

Well now, dear —, how does this law of spiritual life in penitence affect you in the matter of — ? 1. Examine yourself in regard to her (as to anybody and everybody with whom you have intercourse) : how you stand—*not before her*, or from your own point of view—but as before God, remembering *His* standard of perfect love to Himself, and of love to your neighbour as to yourself.

Of course, looking at yourself from your *own* standard, you will not, probably, see much, if anything, to condemn. But, considering what the works and fruits of the Spirit and the flesh are, respectively (see the Epistle for Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity), and their results from *God's point of view* ; considering also the model of sweetness and patience and gentleness and endurance of wrong "even unto death" which He has given us in Jesus ;

\* See note at end of chapter.

considering how it would fare with *you* in the Judgment if your allowance for and patience with —— (for example) should be taken, *then*, for the measure of God's allowance and patience with you;— then, perhaps, it will be different ; and if you ask God the Holy Ghost to give you light, your heart will, perhaps, be convicted of much, in thought and word and deed, which *He* must condemn in you, and which, therefore, His dear child *must* condemn in herself. 2. Having been convicted by God the Holy Ghost of sin (not before man or according to man's standard, perhaps, but of sin before Him), your mind will not dwell (for example) on ——'s faults and sins (they may be very great, and she may have been "intolerable"), but on *your own* faults, and especially on your want of a Christlike spirit and temper under provocation ; and then, asking for true sorrow, the Blessed Spirit will give it you : and having true sorrow for being, in anything, opposed to the love of God and the mind of God, you will not spare yourself or justify yourself, or think that any amount of wrong in another can make wrong to be right in you ; and so you will give evidence of your sorrow, and God's pardon will be sure to be yours.

We *must* not be taken up with the sins or faults of others, and make out that these are our own justification, in any way, for falling short of the highest Christian type of character : we must measure ourselves by the highest and leave others alone, and simply grieve in God's presence for our own shortcomings, and pray for His pardon upon our penitence. May God guide you into all His whole truth, and make you His own without a single reserve.

To ——.

It is a great consolation of the soul that it is in the hands of Almighty God, who is Love, and that He knows our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking ; and that if He gives the will to desire to be more moulded to His mind, He will accomplish it. So the worst would be to think you can't do better. *Nunc cæpi* should be our motto every day. There is no limit to our powers of failure, or of success, because He is so

strong that He can work in us. That is the comfort—if you *desire* His work in you. It is a great mercy that your eyes should be open to know one very besetting sin, love of self. It is an earnest that He will enable you to overcome it. Say *nunc capi* in full confidence that He will enable you to overcome.

I have often had occasion to point out to you multiplied hindrances to grace through self-love, that root of bitterness against which you have to contend. It is a subtle temptation of Satan to lead you to desire your own will in good things. What He wills for you is really nearest to Him. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” You are brought *nearer* by bearing, by being cut off. Sacraments are His; He supplies them through the great sacrament of obedience. You substitute your own will for that, and are over-persuaded by love of self to desire what you would like instead of what He desires for you. So if you analyze it, it is absence of love for Him, and love of self. You make yourself unhappy because you can’t get what you will, instead of being happy in what He wills: if you loved more, you would have more joy in submitting, than in the fulfilment of your wishes. You have to ask Him to give you more love: nothing can separate you from His love; you can have no trial compared to those of the early Christians; and yet St. Paul says, “None of these things move me.” It is wrong to speak of being cut off; it is a preference of your own will to the will of God. The same is the cure for that other thing you speak of—loss of fervency in good works lest you should go wrong. Again, intrusion of self; nothing is wrong to one who loves. Good works are acceptable according to their motive—if it be love of God, not of self. Begin with a distinct desire to do any good work as a fruit of love, and you can’t go wrong; all is possible to him that loveth. The key to both your troubles is love: you have failed because of shortcoming in love; you will succeed as you love more. Meditate for a few minutes each day on the Gospel for St. Michael and All Angels: “Except ye become as little children.” Set the picture of a little child before you—the simplicity of its love, its humility and trustfulness. You are not as a little child, pray Him

to make you more like one ; a little child does not ask why it is here or there.

#### TO THE SAME.

One great fault of yours is to look out for extra help when not making the most of what God has given you. You do not wilfully neglect the latter, though the passage is easy from failure in using to wilful abuse and neglect ; and you must watch lest you cross the line which separates them. It is obvious that God's dealings are not general, but particular : He deals with each one of us as if there were no other soul in the world, and all becomes profit to you according as you use it or not. If you fail to use grace, through suffering or doing, it is vain to look out for other means of grace of your own choosing : you are not to expect help in your own way if not taking it in His. To speak more in detail : you do not make the most of sacramental dealings in bearing, in suffering, in humiliation. He sends trials whether you will or no ; you do not derive as much help as you might from them, while you think you might have more helps in other circumstances. It enters into the radical defect which you have to cure, God helping you, that of desiring your own way of profiting instead of His ; I consider that a sore place in your spiritual constitution, against which you have to be on your guard. There is more profit in submission than in having your own way in spiritual things to the utmost, apart from Him.

But one of your great difficulties is the ever impelling desire for your own will in Divine things, as in others ; you can resign yourself, but not with the grace of feeling it is best ; there is an absence of joy in humiliation and suffering. Joy in being mortified should be your aim ; and you are very far from that. There is a subtle form of justifying yourself, an unwillingness to humble yourself so as to take what is appointed for you. You would rather go through things in your own way. Your tendency is to try and compass the ends which seem to you good in your own way, without thinking if they are pleasing to God. A most desirable habit is silence under reproach—to be willing to be blamed amiss.

Aim high, and walk low ; let self-abnegation be your aim ; pray for the grace of reticence and self-control. Think of what was most beautiful in —, conformity to God's will, humility, and forgetfulness of self. The lesson of the Incarnation is humility and self-sacrifice.

#### TO THE SAME.

We must discriminate between what is outside of us and that which is within us. That which is outside is God's ordering ; that which is within is subject to our own will. It is a fit matter for confession if any act of the will has been against His will—self-choosing, self-will, etc. As to overstrain—physical conditions leading you to leave obligations undone—it is not wrong if not wilfully brought on yourself. Knowing how exhausted you get, you must watch not to waste physical force ; you are not careful enough. Husband your power for the great purposes of life ; spiritual exercises abridged for the sake of love is not sin. That is outside. Your cold feelings are not you, not part of your moral self ; they are part of your imagination, of your sensitive nature ; you are not responsible for feelings without you indulge them. Thoughts which disturb us are either from the Holy Ghost or from the evil one. Doubts are emanations from hell,—all around us, excessive in this age. The presence of such trials is evidence from God of real childhood, if you are made to feel that you are surrounded by evil, and in a conflict. Say "Get thee behind me, Satan ;" practise continual renunciation of him and his agents ; avoid them, and protect yourself by the sign of the cross, and, "Deliver me, O Lord."

As to desolation, loneliness, all seeming barren—that is from God, and the end good. It is His chastening hand. All must be chastised. To some His scourging comes in suffering, bereavement, loss of property ; to others in spiritual losses. He knows what is best ; chastises us that we may be brought low. No doubt He sees your anxiety about spiritual helps, and throws you back to bring you closer to Himself.

And so, my dear child, you learn year by year as your proba-

tion goes on, and you come nearer to the end, as the borders grow narrower, closing around you, and you feel the pressure of your probation, that you are to be saved in *His* way, not in your own. What does it matter, if we be saved in the end, whether it be as a brand plucked from the burning, or after years and years of spiritual consolation? Seek compunction, not consolation. What we have to do is to grow in humility; your danger is to think much of self. He brings you into a lowlier state, makes you know you are far behind instead of far on.

The letter which follows was written to one, now long gone to her rest, with a constitutional tendency to insanity, and preserved from it by the wise and thoughtful counsel and forbearance which "comforted the feeble-minded."

To —.

Thus much I wish to impress upon you, whatever the subject may be. As to the particular subject of confession—take this once for all, and then leave all doubt and scruple—God has appointed spiritual persons to be guides of souls, whose office it is to direct and comfort, to refresh the weary, to strengthen the weak, to confirm the strong, and to instruct the doubtful. To *use their advice*, therefore, in humble gratitude to God, is the actual remedy which God has appointed.

And now I will pass on.

I have, in a former letter, shown you such a picture of yourself as I hope quite serves to convince you that you are suffering from a diseased conscience. If you follow up its symptoms farther, you will be the more convinced of this. It is most important that you should be quite convinced of it.

Accusing yourself, without definite form or matter; your very best efforts making you fear; most earnestly unwilling to offend God, yet not knowing how to avoid it; not standing anywhere for fear of slipping everywhere; thinking every step a danger and every attempt a failure; and believing yourself drowning, when



you are firm on dry land. It is as if you were walking in the dark, where you see nothing to frighten you, and yet your fancy is presenting all manner of evils to trouble and alarm you ; a horror of you know not what ; taking advice, and then doubting whether your adviser understands you, and so not following it or reaping profit from it ; more at peace and rest for a little time, and then, all anew in wretchedness and misery again. Such are some of the symptoms which mark your disease, and show that it *is* a disease. And then the effects of it, which confirm the symptoms and prove the correctness of the decision—a certain coldness and distaste at God's service, even at your devotional exercises and at the Holy Communion ; and from distaste, a certain discouragement and hopelessness about them all ; then also a derangement of bodily health and strength, a want of energy and vigour and spirit, and a growing incapacity for the ordinary duties of life.

A consideration of these symptoms and effects make it plain that your state of mind is not a departure from God and goodness, but a state of disease—and a disease which, without any doubt, may, with His help, be certainly cured. But first let us inquire how and whence it has come upon you. And this is very important for you to know and think over. To know whence your trouble comes will help you greatly to bear it, nay, even to profit by it. This will suffice for the present letter.

First, then, it may be that this comes to you direct from God. He has a design of mercy in it for your greater perfection. Either He would punish you for some presumption and boldness in His sight, hidden from yourself hitherto, but known to Him ; or, which is most probable, He would detach you more from self, and from your appetite for sensible delight in serving Him ; He would take you off from the desire of always *feeling* Him nigh, in order that you might rather learn to serve Him for His own sake, and not for the comfort which it brings. Or it is possible that God may be preparing you, through a process of suffering in the spirit, for the reception of some great and unspeakable grace. The second seems the most probable purpose, if one may venture

to speak of what is probable with God. But whatever it be—if it be from God, and so far as it is from God—it will be but for a time, for “the twinkling of an eye: heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” In all such a case, it is with you as with the moon—the nearer she approaches the sun the less does her *light* shine. But her light remains the same in itself. So in the midst of your darkness which God causes—He makes you to love Him nevertheless, though you are not sensible of your love, nay, though you think you are offending Him. By-and-by, this cloud will pass away from you, just as the vapours which the sun draws up from their thickness and coldness on the earth by-and-by disperse and fall down as the brightest dew.

It is easy to tell when your trouble comes from God, by the submission to His holy will, and by the docility and trustfulness and humility with which you conduct yourself under the process of cure.

But secondly, your disease may come from Satan, the evil one, the enemy of souls. And that it does so, in part, appears from the nature of it. Let not this amaze or discourage you. It is the especial work of Satan to come between us and our peace. And that he should come between you and yours is nothing strange. He has also especial power over our imaginations; and he wrongs us through this power; he excites fears and doubts—no matter how, with foundation or without foundation, it is all the same to him, so he disturbs and discourages us. Just like an opposing army set down before a citadel to take it; by feigning to attack, or by really attacking, no matter which, if only it wears out the besieged, and vexes them by perpetual watching, and so gains its position at last—such is the devil’s way.

He suggests doubts and scruples about things indifferent, and makes difficulties about everything, because he wishes you to do nothing. He would have you believe that you have fallen out of God’s favour, and are an object of His hatred, because he wishes to discourage you from serving God at all. He exaggerates and misrepresents the difficulty of this and that duty, because he wishes to disgust you with all duty. If a thing be hard to do, he

says it is impossible. He would cut off all confidence in God as being "a hard master," because he wishes you to "bury" your talent in the earth, and to give up trading with it; that is, give up church, and services, and Holy Communion, and prayers and meditations.

Thirdly, your disease may come from your own natural constitution and temperament, that is, from your weakness and infirmity. And this is greatly your case. Men are open more or less to spiritual diseases according to their form and texture, by nature, in mind and body. (Just as it is in the vegetable world: the fir tree is more apt to produce worm-eaten wood than the cedar or the oak.) And when this is the case, Satan takes advantage, and makes religion, as it were, strike itself upon the face by the weak tremblings of its own fingers. Weak health, for instance, making your bodily strength very unequal, and so affecting the spirits. A naturally shy and timid and reserved and cold disposition. Feebleness of mind easily deceiving itself, and taking that for *wrong* which is simply indifferent. Ignorance also and want of information. Then, and this perhaps most of all, a certain *amour propre*, if I may so express it, which sets a person upon seeking too great an assurance of the goodness and correctness of his devotions and duties—a greater assurance than is possible—and solely for his own greater comfort in religion.

And now I think I have exhausted the root and source of that spiritual disease under which you suffer. My object is that you may steadily and patiently look it in the face and see what it is—a disease. That it is not a state of sin, or a state in which God is angry with you; rather otherwise—a state in which God is dealing with you graciously, or in which He is pitying you with His loving pity and ready to help you with His almighty arm.

#### TO THE SAME.

I fear I have much disappointed you, by so long delaying to answer your letter.

But you will kindly believe that indifference to your needs has not been the cause. Indeed, since I saw you at — you have

never been a day out of my thoughts, and you are always remembered in my prayers.

I am not very strong, as you know; and the weakness under which I suffer affects all I undertake to do. Yours is an exceedingly difficult spiritual case to deal with, and it has been from an exceeding desire to deal with it wisely and well, that I have not been able to make up my mind about it sooner. I earnestly hope and pray that you may be no sufferer through this deliberation. Nay, rather I may hope that after you have recovered the first disappointment, you will be the gainer.

I wish, deliberately, to go through your difficulties, one by one, and to analyze them to you, that you may face them as they really are and not as you imagine them to be. And then I wish to attack your enemy from all the different points on which he has made himself assailable. This will take some time. And both you and I will have to exercise all that waiting forbearance which is necessary with everything which cannot be done offhand and at once. I will write first one letter and then another, as I can—it may be often at some interval, one from the other; and you will kindly study and pray over what I write, and not be impatient or lose heart, because I do not write quickly enough, or you do not quickly enough gather up the comfort you hope for.

And remember that all I attempt to offer, and all you do your best to receive, will go for nothing without God's special grace, which you must beg for by special prayer. I advise you to consider solemnly, for a second or two, that you are submitting yourself to guidance and direction at the hands of one to whom God's providence has sent you, and then to kneel down, and in thought of that means being blessed to you, say, "O Lord my God, I beseech Thee, strengthen me with that blessed Spirit of Thine, the Ghostly Comforter, and daily increase in me Thy manifold gifts of grace, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness, and fulfil me, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear, even through Him who hath sent down the Spirit upon His Church, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

I will first of all speak of what is on the surface of your letter, and what comes first is "the great trouble" you spoke of when I saw you. Now, my dear child, I am far from underrating that trouble. But face it and see what it really is. *Ought* it to remain a trouble? Supposing that your father was *forcing* his opinions on the subject of confession upon you, and requiring you to yield to them and to the results which seem to follow upon them, you might then doubtless feel that a great trouble was laid upon you. But so far from this being the case, your father leaves you entirely free; and you are under the direction of one in whom you have the comfort of knowing that he has confidence, who yet does *not* certainly regard confession as necessary for all, and, under your present circumstances, not necessary—not even desirable—for you.

But the trouble is that you do not feel a confidence that your father is right, and that such a feeling branches out, and unsettles your general strength of reliance on his judgment. And this not with any regard to yourself personally, but with regard to others and what must needs come under your observation.

Now, my answer to this statement of the case is very plain and easy. I do not so much say how such a feeling might well arise in your mind, as that such a feeling *ought not* to be. Such a feeling might most naturally arise. But it might also most naturally be put down. And I will tell you how.

The subject of it all is this question of confession—a difficult and a most important question. Your father has made a sort of special property in it, and taken it up warmly and earnestly. And like all men who take up *one* subject warmly and earnestly, he has overpressed some of its bearings and relations, and disturbed its main position with respect to other subjects. It is the natural infirmity of human minds to do this. Your father's mind is only human, and it should be no prejudice to his *general* judgment and wisdom, that he has done on the subject of confession what all human minds are liable to do on subjects which they take up too exclusively.

But then there is So-and-so, and several others, who take

advantage of this infirmity, and instead of trying to make it less by doing their parts more considerately, make it greater and do their best to fix and establish it. And this is a great daily sorrow to you.

Well, and I can understand that. But over against it, you should set your own liability to misunderstand and to misjudge. And you should stir up within your own heart the grace of charity and love. And then you would say, "I *may* mistake So-and-so—her or his needs may be very different from what I take them to be ; so may all the kindness, and love, and attention, and readiness to meet their wishes which I see on my father's part. And, at any rate, he is the servant of men for Christ's sake ; and the less he spares himself the more is he like his Master." So you would reason all hardness and danger of unkind or unloving thought out of your mind.

And, lastly, on the whole view of this "trouble," it should be put down and expelled by the force of one overpowering conviction, that, be your father right or wrong in his opinions, while his love for you has set you free from their operation on yourself, he is most single-hearted and earnest and sincere in his desire to save the souls of men. I sum up this letter and this part of my subject with but one or two earnest words of counsel :

Ask God for help to drive away this trouble. Read what I have written again and again about it, and begin to act upon the strength of the conviction which it leaves.

Continue to trust in your father's judgment in general, even though the natural infirmity of man may have led him to make a mistake in some particular.

And above all things try all your own judgment of all things by the test of inward humility and meekness as respects yourself, and true Christian charity and love as respects others.

I will write again very soon. Meantime I commend you earnestly to the love and mercy of our God.

To —.

I have not left myself room enough, or strength enough, to add what is in my heart to say about your spiritual report of yourself this Easter.

What I gather about you is, that you do not *rise* to the joy of the forty days; that you are dull and cold, and more stiffened than purified by Lent; that you have to mourn the absence of that consolation to a "broken heart" which ought to come, at Easter, to the pardoned penitent. Well, so it may well be, and you still be a greater gainer than if it were otherwise. Consolation is not so good for the soul, or so great a gift from God, as *compunction*. And, perhaps, He wills that this grace should be deepened in you by showing you your need of humiliation in the consciousness of great shortcomings. You have, it may be, thirsted greatly after heavenly things, but for yourself more than for His glory; and so your thirst has not been quenched. It has not been *pure* thirst for love of Him; it has been rather a keen thirst for what brings joy and peace to your own soul; and therefore, to humble you *out* of self and *into* Him, your thirst has not been satisfied. You are dry and parched still, as in a land where no water is.

It will nevertheless be to you a gainful Easter-tide and Ascension-tide, if you will but offer your "dulness" to God, as the result of your own infirmity; and ask Him to turn it into the grace of cheerful, humble patience, operating in increased watchfulness against self-pleasing, increased bravery in perseverance in baffling your enemy, your besetting enemy, who seeks to undermine your service to God by mingling the *motif* of it. Take for a penitential exercise, for ten days, a short meditation on the forty-ninth chapter of the third book of the "Imitatio," with the Collect for Easter Day to conclude.

God bless and keep you ever.

## TO THE SAME.

Hope, and rely on grace given, and *use* it diligently, absolutely surrendering self and all self-comfort to God, and leaving the whole issue of consolation and joy and peace in believing to Him. Your real danger now is not so much that you do not grow on unto perfection, as that you are grieved and wounded and disappointed and in despair, because you do not see and feel your progress, and because you are trusting and expecting to see it and to feel it, without the evidence of His Spirit to your spirit that you are diligent and patient and self-forgetting. Let go self, and do your present duty ; abandon *all* the desire for consolations, and cling to compunction and trustfulness and hope ; and then your growth will be undoubted, whether it be manifest or not.

The following letter, to one who had the trial of seeing a noble-hearted and beloved husband become insane, is given because it may possibly be of comfort to other like sufferers :—

. . . You need never fear doing wrong by writing, at all times, freely to me, whenever you find the least relief in giving vent to the fulness of your poor aching heart. .

It is most natural for you to feel as you say, and to say what you feel. But you know that nature is not our best guide and comfort in a sorrow like yours. Nature must have her way, and there is a certain *kind* of relief in giving her free scope ; and, for a time, there will be little hope in the effort of setting anything against her. But grace is the power which surpasses nature, and controls and sanctifies and sweetens all her emotions.

If I could help you to banish the vision which haunts you, by saying, "Banish it," the thing would be soon and easily done ! Yet, by-and-by, God will mercifully also take this away. Meantime, set over against it the *certainly* that it was not really *he* whom you saw so strangely and mysteriously changed, but his poor oppressed body, with his own true spirit away and the



disease, which mangles and mars the best of us (so miserable is sin in its effects upon man), consuming him. It was not *he* whom you saw, and will, in God's good time, see again: it was the sin of our common nature, from which, by-and-by, he will be purged and separated for ever. The words he uttered were not *his* words, but the words of evil, out of and beyond his control; as much so as if they had been spoken by another personality, out of his sight and hearing and reach.

The visitation of insanity is a fearful mystery which we cannot measure; and it is better not to speculate upon it. The truth is that God *suffers* it to befall those whom it does befall, out of His mercy and love; and we can know no more. It is no disparagement of God's mercy that so fearful a punishment should be laid upon any child of His love—because the more grievous the chastisement here on earth, the more fully will love be known in heaven, when the veil shall be taken away which conceals the motive of it now. It *need* not be his *own* sins which bring this visitation; the fathers' sins are visited on the children, for many generations, in the wonders of God's moral world: neither need this be undoubtedly; for as of the man born blind, so of your dear one, it may be that "neither hath this man sinned *nor* his parents," but that the will of God may be fulfilled, and His glory made manifest!

There is only one thing which we know for *certain*, and that is, "God is love!" and the suffering which love involves, because of the sins of mankind, we know by the sufferings which Jesus bore, who Himself knew no sin. Look on that picture, and you will see how vain and unworthy (though so natural to poor flesh and blood) is the thought of God seeming to be "unjust" or "cruel" in permitting your dear one to go through this crucible of suffering, or rather *you* to go through it (for mercifully he does not suffer), on his and your way to glory and rest.

What matters it, after all, *what* befalls us, while we know that the hand is God's which strikes? It is only for a little while we are in the dark. He is All Light. We know nothing; He knows everything. Who need care about the way, so it be not

our own self-chosen way, and so it be the way which God chooses, whereby to lead us safely home? Comfort your poor heart with the thought—

“I will be still,  
Do Thou Thy will,  
My God !”

Think as little as you can of your dear one's present state ; think much of the state in which, after a little while of endurance, both you and he will be glorified together with Jesus for ever. Commit him, every minute, to God's hands ; pray for him there, and *leave* him there, happy in the safety which *must* be there.

In like manner, commit yourself with confidence to your Heavenly Father, who knows your every sigh and misgiving and fear, and loves you with an eternal love, and who *cannot* do you wrong.

After He has troubled you awhile He will return and speak peace to you : He will always “stablish, strengthen, comfort, settle you.” I always pray and offer for you. . . . God be with you.

To another, suffering from long illness, he wrote :

You are cut off from external aids and means of grace, and your inner stock of spiritual strength seems feeble and unequal to the demand upon it ; and all seems too hard to be borne patiently, because the *power* of patience seems to have died out from want of the feeding help of grace. Shut up, and cut off, and cast on one's self—and one's self so barren and slow—oh, the difficulties and disheartenings are many, and you feel almost “frightened” at the result. Well, my view of it all may be wrong, but it is decided and clear.

Who are we that we should ever, even in thought, imagine for ourselves a more profitable and salutary probation, as to the spiritual life, than the probation that the providence of God assigns? If it be God's doing that you suffer loss and pain and cutting off and shutting up, shall He not make His own will and

your conformity thereunto more sacramental and prodigal of grace to your soul than if you had the ordering for yourself of daily communions and daily instructions at will? It is a sign of absolute unbelief when we are more in search of God's *means* of grace than of God, and therefore more out of heart, when God shuts us up from sacraments, drawing us closer to Himself through the obedience of suffering, than when we have access daily and hourly to the altar, but have no check upon the gratification of our own desires.

I have no doubt but that God is dealing more personally and intimately, and, I will add, more effectively (if you do not hinder), for the glory of His own name and the purification of your soul, by cutting you off from outward helps, and causing you to suffer, than when He was pleased to bring a *plethora* of sacraments to your door.

And I say the same of rules of life, and counsels of perfection, and precepts of duty, and laws of conduct, by which you have at various times been overwhelmed. God is more loving to you in throwing you back upon His former gifts and causing you to *use* the grace which you have already received, than if He were to stay His chastening and correcting hand, and invite you to go on heaping fresh gifts upon the mass of so many unused.

Do not vex your memory with rules which were applicable in detail to other circumstances, but which are only good for present emergencies in their principle and in their substance. Let your rule be simple, viz. to use, hour by hour, day by day, the actual fact of suffering by the will of God. It is an actual fact that the root of most evil in all of us, as in you, is our *amour propre*—self-love; and it is an actual fact that God sends us suffering that this self-love may be mortified and killed. Let your rule be to practise (1) detachment from your own will in everything, welcoming restraints, sacrifices, losses, etc., as gain: (2) detachment from your own credit with others, as matter of gratulation and satisfaction; and to welcome slights and snubs and even contempt; at any rate, to be more glad when others seem not to care or to sympathize, than when they soothe and flatter and caress:

(3) detachment from your own ease, and from that comfort and convenience which make as if the one desirable thing were to get rid of suffering and pain and discipline; and to welcome external persons and things, which at least tend to qualify all refreshment, if they do not minister to the reality of your mortifications.

Aim at these examples of a rule of mortification, if only to witness to God that the desire of your heart is to co-operate with Him; not to please yourself *with* Him, in your own way, but to obey and honour Him, in *His* way. And trust Him implicitly and wholly—not His promises, or His sacraments, or His priests, or His grace—all these; but not these *only*—but HIM. He is over you, in you, above you, below you; all around you to keep you, to bless you, to heal you, to save you. Trust yourself to Him with the trust of an infant; of absolute, undoubting, unconditional surrender. And doubt not that all things, for body and soul, will work together in the march of good—of final ultimate good—through whatever evil you may have to pass.

God ever bless and keep you.

To —.

As the Incarnation of the Eternal Son Himself had no higher end than the glory of the Father, so *à fortiori* your life and mine have no end conceivable but that, and that alone. But the end of His glory can only be attained through obedience, sanctified by the sacrifice of the Cross. The obedience of the Eternal Son and His sacrifice are at once the pattern and the plea of ours. In Him and with Him all vicarious sacrifices and sufferings are consummated and finished. In Him every man must bear his own burden. "No man may deliver his brother nor make agreement unto God for him." God has no need of —; nor does He want —, except in His own time and in His own way. The notion of —'s so-called usefulness to the Church and of —'s so-called unusefulness is a purely human and shortsighted and faithless notion. God can serve His Church far more

fully by taking — away from work, if so He shall see fit, than by granting him strength for work.

We need not look on, except to be sure that God will deal with us according to His mercy and our needs. The *present* need, at the present time, according to the present opportunity of grace, is what He would always have us satisfy.\*

\* To prevent possible misconception as to Mr. Skinner's teaching on the subject of Confession, the following extract is given from a pastoral letter to his parishioners at Newland :—

*Confession of Sin.*

“I offer the opportunity, to such as may desire it, of confession of sin, privately, and special absolution for the same. I can but repeat, on this subject, what I said last year.

“Confession to God, in secret, is a *necessary* part of repentance—not merely a confession of sin on the whole, but of separate sins, one by one, in detail ; and therefore confession of sin to God is required in Lent. Confession of sins to a priest is not a necessary part of repentance ; but it is, in mercy, as much provided by the Church of England, as by every other part of Christ's Church on earth, for sin-stricken souls. I am sure it is as much needed in England as in any part of the world. For it is the *assurance to ourselves*, not only of the truth and the shame of our repentance, but also of an admission to pardon which the order of the priesthood is appointed specially to convey. Therefore, if any one ‘cannot quiet his own conscience, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned minister of God's Holy Word, that he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and the avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.’”

## CHAPTER VII.

### LETTERS AND SPIRITUAL COUNSEL—*continued.*

1853.

“I, loving freedom, and untried ;  
No sport of every random gust,  
Yet being to myself a guide,  
Too blindly have reposed my trust :  
And oft, when in my heart was heard  
Thy timely mandate, I deferred  
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;  
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.”

It would be difficult for any one to write letters to those in illness so full of experience and sympathy as some of those in the last chapter, who had not learnt in suffering what he taught. Yet the writer's own lessons in that school were but beginning. During 1852 his health was fairly good, though he broke down in July from overwork in excessive heat, and was sent out of London by his doctor's orders. A short visit to Guernsey patched him up, and he returned to his work with his usual ardour. The Lent work of 1853 tried him much, but he did not take any rest until after St. Barnabas' Day, when he left England with the Bishop of Columbia for a short tour abroad. But at Paris, after a fatiguing day, he was attacked by sudden and violent hæmorrhage from the lungs. His wife was sent for at once, and arrived, in the greatest anxiety, to find him better than could have been hoped ; still the attack was

so serious, and had so enfeebled him, that his returning to London for some time was out of the question. As soon as he could move he was sent by his Paris doctor to Lippe-Springe, near Paderborn, in Westphalia, to try the effect of its baths and waters, under a Dr. Bolle, who had been most successful in similar cases. There he arrived on August 7. Dr. Bolle took the warmest interest in his patient, and after four weeks of treatment at Lippe-Springe, Mr. Skinner seemed sufficiently recovered to return to his work.

On September 16 he and his wife were again at their St. Barnabas' home ; but his doctors pronounced him entirely unfit to set to work, and ordered him out of London at once. As a *locum tenens* had been provided, he was able to obey, and again left London. Later in the autumn, he made another effort to resume work, but it soon became too evident that this was impossible, and he decided to winter at Clifton, where he established himself with his family in December, entirely giving up active work, except by correspondence. To one who had asked him for a rule of life, he writes :

I send you a sketch of a Rule of Life.

*Aim* after accomplishing it, and do not be disheartened if you fail.

Aim high, and begin again when you fail, like the October fly on the window pane.

*A Rule of Life.*

All Rules of Life must be made to resolve themselves into *six* principal things, which those who seek to please God *must* set themselves to do by the help of His grace.

I. To purify their souls entirely from those past sins which they have committed.

II. To abstain from committing new sins.

III. To fulfil, faithfully, all their duties.

IV. To aim at the practice, more and more, of Christian graces and good acts.

V. To bear, patiently, the evils of life.

VI. To do all things to the glory of God.

In detail, *aim* at the following :

I. If you go to bed at 11, rise at 6.30.

If you go „ at 10, rise at 6.

II. Your first thought on waking—let it be of God.

Your first emotion—an act of love to God.

Your first words—“ In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” and the *Veni Creator*.

Your first action—the Sign of the Cross.

III. Rise, at once, without delay, and, having washed, begin your prayers, before completing your toilet, with—

(a) An act of faith.

(b) „ of adoration.

(c) „ of thanksgiving. (The “Treasury of Devotion” or the “Twenty-one Heads” will give you forms.)

(d) An act of oblation of yourself to God, and of your actions during the day, resolving that you will not do *anything* without the thought of pleasing Him.

At the conclusion of these acts, make a resolution to walk all the day as in the presence of God, and pray God the Holy Ghost to help you.

IV. Then go on with your dressing : have a Psalter open on your table, or the “Imitatio,” and say psalms, or read a portion of the “Imitatio.”

At the end of your dressing and before you go down to breakfast,

Finish the rest of your devotions—

(a) Your confession ;

(b) Your petitions ;

(c) Your intercessions. (See the “Treasury of Devotion,” Horst’s “Paradise of the Christian Soul,” etc.)

And make an act of *spiritual communion*, joining yourself on to the altar of this church, or of some other when there is a daily



celebration. (See the Manual of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.)

V. After breakfast, go about your household duties as unto God, remembering that your husband, your visitors, your servants, are, *all*, in His sight, and that you must behave to them as in His presence.

Transact all business, letter-writing, etc.

VI. At noon (any time between twelve and two) go to your room for half an hour, or an hour (if you can).

(1) Make a self-examination of the day (so far), and *renew* the resolution of the morning, for the remainder of the day.

(2) If you should ever miss making it now, make it before you dress for dinner.

(3) Read some portion of the Holy Scripture, and meditate upon it. (See Du Guesne.)

Say "Sext" or the Sixth Hour. ("Treasury of Devotion.")

VII. Spend the afternoon in—

(a) Visiting sick and poor to relieve them ;

„ the ignorant to teach them ;

„ friends and neighbours for Christ's sake.

Or (b) working for others in some way.

Or (c) reading } for the cultivation of your mind and its  
or writing } faculties.

VIII. Spend the evening in the social duties of your home, or (within limits) in society out of it ; but always remembering that God goes with you everywhere, and watches your conduct, inwardly and outwardly, with His loving but piercing eyes.

IX. As a rule, go to your room at 10 p.m., and—

(1) Begin your devotions, as in the morning, with the four acts.

(2) Then your self-examination for the day, always beginning with the besetting sin which you have set yourself especially to overcome.

(3) Note down the results of your examination.

(4) Then your acts as in the morning—

Of (1) Confession ;

(2) Petition ;

(3) Intercession.

X. When you are ready for bed, (1) look at it, as on your grave, and go into it, with the same sense of going to God as when you die.

(2) Let your last thoughts, affections, words, and actions be the same as at waking; only, when you sign yourself, say, "Into Thy hands I commend my body, soul, and spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, Thou God of Truth."

If you wake fifty times in the night, sign yourself again, with the same words, as often as you are *consciously* awake.

For general counsels take these :—

1. Communicate every Sunday and feast-day (if possible), and *always fasting*.

2. Visit the poor once a week.

Work for them on Wednesdays and Fridays.

3. Observe the Friday fast and that of vigils.

4. Take *one* day in the month and keep it reserved and quiet, as a day of recollection. Examine yourself by this Rule of Life, and mark wherein you have neglected, or been lax about it; you will renew your resolution and purpose about it.

5. Be sure to keep an *annual retreat* somewhere, and to make your confession, on an average, not less than four times a year.

6. If at any time roused to anger or provoked, do not speak, save under strong necessity, and when you *do* speak, let it be with gentleness and after consideration.

Do not visit (except under a strong necessity) people *who openly offend God in their ways and habits of life*, and when you *must* go, let your visits be short and your manner grave and serious.

There are *two* sorts of persons with whom you cannot associate too much :

(1) Those whose good example encourages and helps you; and

(2) Those whom you believe have power to bring you more out of the world and more near to God.

7. Never be afraid to *stand up* for Christ.

Have zeal and bravery enough *always* (as much as you can) to stop all doubtful, loose, and uncharitable conversation in your hearing. And when you *cannot* hinder, yet have the courage to

say that you are *not* on that side. If the position of those who offend hinder you from an outspoken protest, still protest by *silence and gravity*.

8. Be careful to remember that *human respect* will profit you *nothing*.

9. (1) Resist the temptation to complain of weather, heat and cold, etc.

(2) In these trials, and in sickness, accept God's will and say, "Thy will be done," and surrender yourself to Him.

10. Be careful to calculate what your means are to spend ; and, on principle, devote *at least one-tenth* to God.

#### TO THE SAME.

##### *On Uncharitableness.*

If people would only examine themselves earnestly, deeply, they would find so much sin in themselves, as should keep them from the presumption of judging harshly and censoriously the sins of their fellow-creatures. Because you must know, if you are true in your self-examination, far more evil of yourself than you can possibly know of any one else.

##### *On Self-examination.*

Make yourself questions. Take the Sermon on the Mount, and by it make yourself questions. This properly done will bring in the commandments 6th, 7th, and 8th.

For instance—

Am I poor in spirit ?

Do I not show anger at once if slighted, not respected or looked up to ?

Have I (if offended) tried at once to show gentleness with a calm, quiet spirit ?

It must, of course, be remembered, in reading such letters as the foregoing, and those which follow, that,

although they are given with the hope that they may be of comfort and profit to many, they were written to individuals whose special needs their adviser knew intimately, and ought not therefore to be taken as his measure of instruction or advice for all. This explains also the difference in his counsels to different correspondents, *e.g.* as to confession. He was wont, in general, to speak of confession as a great means of overcoming such faults and infirmities as, though not "deadly," yet *intercept* grace, and of the "benefit of absolution," as removing such hindrances to the full operation of grace upon the soul. Upon this subject he writes :

Faults which are of habit become matter for more frequent confession, in proportion to their power of *intercepting* grace.

It is a mere truism to say that a *habit* (say) of forgetting the Divine Presence, or of omitting spiritual reading, etc., must more or less *hinder* grace. Consider some such help as this :

1. Your breach of rule, by omission or by commission, day by day.
2. Did conscience remind you of it, and how often? Was conscience instantly obeyed? Or was it put off? Or was it stifled?
3. Did any person remind you of it, or of any other fault? Or did any circumstance remind you of it? And,
  - (a) Were you humbled? And,
  - (b) Were you improved? Or,
  - (c) Were you only irritated, vexed, or put out?
4. Your speech—was it hasty, or inaccurate, or impatient, or censorious, or complaining? Or was it unnecessary talk which *could* do no good and *might* do mischief.

Make up your account at the usual time, and *put it aside*; I don't mean forget it—God forbid—but do not let it impede you from a fresh start and a renewal of hope, and another "*Nunc capi*." Keep it by you, till you can see your regular confessor, laying it down meanwhile at the foot of the cross, and beginning promptly and faithfully again.

Read as a help to meditation upon your needs, the "De Imitatione," lib. ii. c. 2, "de Humili Submissione."

"*Dei est adjuvare et ab omni confusione liberare.*"

To —.

I deprecate changes in a Confessor, as highly as man can do ; but then, I mean change for change's sake. When a soul *needs* to be unburdened and set free, and has no access to its accustomed spiritual helper, the healthy and the natural course would be to call in the nearest and best that can be had. It is by no means the least of the blessing of doing this, that one practises one's self against the temptation to lean upon special instruments, rather than upon Christ alone.

Do not allow yourself to be agitated unduly in the act of confession ; because this excessive emotion impairs the lucidity and clearness of your self-accusation, while it adds nothing to the element of contrition. I think we are more really in the spirit of contrition (that is, of sorrowing love) when we are calm, and collected, and restrained, and distinct and specific in our sentence against ourselves.

The two following letters are to people unsettled in their allegiance to the English Church ; the first being to one whom he had advised to seek an interview with a distinguished English theologian :—

I do not decide whether it would have profited you or no to have *seen* Dr. Pusey ; but it was a duty for the omission of which you have offered no adequate reason. That you were "*surprised*" by his letter, and disappointed by his arguments, was not conclusive that you understood him ; still less were your notions of what Dissenters say, and your *imagination* of Dr. Pusey's rule of faith, so necessarily accurate, that, in so momentous a matter, you could dispense with the common justice of hearing him out. But it is the course which others have taken before you, first, to form a

*will* and a *purpose* for themselves, and then to hurry on with it without *justice* to others.

I cannot understand Dr. Pusey as *you* have done, or else I differ with him as much nearly as yourself. In one sense, surely, *different* Churches—the Churches, that is, of *different nations and people*; such Churches in plurality as St. Paul speaks of when he says, “The *Churches* of Christ salute you”—in one sense, surely, *different* Churches are *parts* of Christ’s mystical Body, and *so* parts that in no other way can Christ’s mystical Body be made up. For in no other way but by a union of *distinct* members, can a Body be composed. And so, too, the various members of the Body may co-exist in various conditions of vigour and energy, and even of soundness. Just as a limb or an eye may be infirm without losing all the life which flows in common through the body.

Thus the Churches of Jerusalem, and Antioch, and Crete, and Ephesus, etc., were all distinct Churches in one sense, being *parts* or *members* of the Body, and yet they were all one as being the Body collectively. They were not the Body, each by itself; they were but parts or members; they were only *the Body*, together.

Now, it is only plain truth, plain alike in fact and in common sense, to say that the plenary inspiration of God the Holy Ghost was promised, and is granted solely and alone, to the *whole* Body of Christ. Do not slur this over. Take the passages of Scripture which you quote further on to support your peculiar claims for Rome—“Another Comforter *with you for ever*,” “The Spirit of Truth to guide you into all truth,” “to teach you all things, etc.” To whom were these words spoken? To whom were they fulfilled? To the whole college of apostles, the *whole* Body of Christ. And so, the *whole* Body of Christ can never err. And so, the Spirit of Truth abides in it for ever. But the *parts* of that Body need not be, and *have not* been, all alike saved from error. The earliest errors which crept into the Church affected some Churches much, others a little, others not at all. And they were errors which struck deep at fundamental truth—the Gnostic heresies first, and later on the Arian. Yet this partial corruption, while, of course, it weakened all, never either altogether destroyed *the*

*parts*, or in the least degree undermined the *whole*. When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church there was no such system set up with it, as Rome has *since* set up for herself—a system which destroys the integrity of the *parts* of Christ's mystical Body while it carnalizes the *whole*; but the Holy Spirit came down upon the *twelve* and filled *the room where they were sitting*. It came down to illuminate and guide the whole Body, *as a whole*; and only *as a whole* was that a guidance and an illumination *for ever*. One apostle was not above another, nor one Church in subjection to another. St. Peter was not St. James's master, nor Jerusalem subservient to Antioch. *All* the rulers of the Churches were equal in their share of that gift, and only as they drew off and separated one from the other, and claimed to teach apart, could the permanency and the profit of it fail. But the various Churches soon began to teach apart, some in this way and some in that; and some fell besides into deadly sins (as the Churches of Asia Minor); and just so, and in the measure of their several defections from the common faith and teaching of the Holy Ghost, the Churches of Christendom were more or less inspired.

I cannot, therefore, understand Dr. Pusey, as you do, to say that "the Holy Spirit does *not* teach the same doctrine to all." But I understand him to say that the Holy Spirit *has* taught *all*, and taught all the same, and all *have*, or might have, what the Holy Spirit taught: but that while the Holy Spirit has thus brought all in one, man and his evil master have ever been seeking *to drive* all asunder; that they have too well succeeded; that doctrines *not* taught by the Holy Spirit, *because not taught to all*, have been taught by some, and so it has been brought to pass, as Dr. Pusey says, "that some has been permitted to fall into error."

You seem to me partly not to do Dr. Pusey's statements justice, and partly not to understand them. Surely there *must* be a degree of inspiration short of plenary inspiration, else you and I would be individually infallible. All inspiration, therefore, from God the Holy Ghost (speaking ordinarily) which is *not* the inspiration of *the whole Body of Christ acting together*, is short of

plenary inspiration. The division of Christendom is a fact which you must face, account for it as you may. I am not authorized to explain it, any more than you. But I must demur to the complacency with which Roman Catholics arrogate to themselves all the *right*, and attribute to the rest of the Christian world all the wrong. The truth is, mankind is altogether wicked, and our divisions *are* our great wickednesses and their fruits. Yet God is gracious and bears with the most wicked, even while He punishes. In whatever degree the people of the Roman Church, or the Russian Church, or the English Church have sinned against God (and I suppose all have so sinned grievously), there is punishment for them. And one punishment which we see and recognize is—religious division. Now the origin and course of that division reveal themselves. There *could not* be division under plenary inspiration. Under plenary inspiration the Roman and the Russian and the English Church were one; in common with the rest of Christ's mystical Body, they were made depositaries of the common faith. This common gift was to be the common bond and the common pledge of their illumination to the end of the world. The origin of division, therefore, and the departure of plenary inspiration in this or that Church, were contemporaneous. Pride and the grieving of God's Spirit and the course of such division lay along the line of *separate teaching*—teaching either short of or beyond the faith once delivered to the saints.

To —.

. . . You must take your utter dissatisfaction with yourself as a good sign, if it make you humble, and resigned to have nothing to offer but an earnest will, amid continued beginnings and little progress. You *have* the infinite and inexhaustible merits of the Cross to offer; and we cannot too soon learn how, when all is done, there is nothing worth God's acceptance but those! You are not a "humbug," if you have nothing to say to God but the "old, old story" of your utter helplessness and shortcomings, so long as you are conscious of giving Him your heart and will, and trying to prove your love by your obedience and submission.



You are only a "humbug" when you go to Him pretending to love Him, and to honour Him, and to try to please Him, when, all the while, you *know* you are only bent upon glorifying and pleasing yourself. . . .

As to your "faith in the *English Church*," which you say you are "losing:" I should like to hear in what "Church" you are *gaining* faith! Try and see that "*English*" is but an accident which may change, and does change with the English wind, but to which we attach nothing of "faith." The *Church* is the Body of Christ—the same in its integral elements, all the world over; and it is in *that* wherein you have "faith" which can never be shaken, because that can never be changed. God has made you an Englishwoman. Well, that is an accident over which you have no control; you cannot change it: so you must accept it, with all its advantages and *disadvantages*. You cannot make yourself a Roman seeing that God has willed you to be something else. But "the Body of Christ," though in England it must bear the trial (as our Lord did in the flesh in Judæa) of English unbelief and carelessness and profanity, is not *really* affected by it. It is not changed by it, and it remains to you the home of your soul, in which you trust, and in which you wait till you are released altogether from faith and enter into enjoyment and possession.

If you saw as much as I have seen of the Roman, and French, and Spanish *accidents*, infesting and affecting the Body of Christ in what is called (by a contradiction in terms) "Roman Catholic countries," you would admit that our English accidents are not *half* so mischievous in their *direct* dishonour to God. What we all want is—(1) a spirit of love and patience to help us, each in our place, to bear with the separate and the common trials of our probation in the world; and (2) a spirit of zeal and devotion and gratitude to make the *most* of these means of access to the powers of grace and holiness which we possess.

The four letters which follow are evidences of careful teaching in the midst of weakness to those who asked for it:

To —.

It has pleased God to give you largely the gift of faith ; while you have it you must diligently use it. One way is—think, how if you had it not? and so brace yourself to hold on to it as your only hope. The mystery of one having it, and another not having it, is not to be inquired into ; but perpetual thanksgiving is due from those who have it. It is a help and protection against the evil of doubt, to make a thanksgiving for the faith which for you raises all questions into a sphere where nothing can touch that faith if you keep close to the Creeds, about which we are safest when not speculating. We are all most safe when trying to live up to our faith. 'God's presence is not *theory*: it is life. You become conscious of it by doing His will. "He that doeth," etc.

You cannot be too careful about renewing all rules of life, and watching where most you fail. You are most sure of God keeping you in the faith when doing His will—most of all when keeping the cardinal law of love. "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Every breach of love, therefore, is a weakening of our hold of the kingdom both of *light* and love.

You continually sin against love without meaning it ; running the risk of offending God through the wish of being agreeable, etc. Make an act of humility from time to time, seeing you waste the grace He gives—waste it without meaning to do so. If our hands were full of gold dust, we should lose it even if we did not mean to do so, unless careful not to let it slip through our fingers : so it is quite possible, without meaning it, to waste grace and the power of love. Therefore make faults, such as wandering in prayer from laxity or negligence, subjects for great humility—for acts of humility. Say, "O my God, I lay this before Thee as an evidence of my sorrow ; accept this my humiliation ; join it to the humiliation of Thy dear Son upon the cross." So, also, when you speak disparagingly of others. When we can't praise, we should be silent, and not speak of infirmities and faults, especially of grave

ones : contempt of speaking of others is a great sin. Take those counsels with respect to faith and the life ; both are sustained by watching over little things, especially those you fail in.

Note this general rule, which you do not keep in mind. You should fix yourself on the *Giver* rather than on the grace which He gives. Whether grace be given more or less, it will not affect your spiritual barometer. Don't dwell unduly on whether you profit little or much ; your duty to the Giver is all the same. He gives the feeling of profit and takes it away. You are depressed ; you think you are less in favour. Let your mind be fixed on the Giver. Of earthly blessings we say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away : " so we should say of gifts of grace.

To —.

. . . There are in you two motive powers, that of grace, and that of nature ; and you are more governed by the power of nature than by that of grace. You have to overcome also your natural temperament. Love of self is at the root. The opposite power of grace is a supernatural gift ; you must pray more and more for it ; only so can you overcome. Try and work it out by closer meditation—that there are these two powers, and that you are too much governed by the one, too little by the other. Strive to overcome and to grow. *Fiat voluntas tua* would embody all. What a mistake it is to suppose that we are unacceptable to God because in illness we cannot perform all our devotions ! To lie still and say, "Thy blessed will be done," is sufficient—no effort of head is necessary for that. In any disappointment, even trifling, say that "*Fiat.*" He is pleased to exercise you continually, and all may depend on whether you accept unreservedly whatever He may appoint for you.

Take another thought, and carry it about with you : that all is acceptable to God according as to whether we do all in a spirit of compunction. Our habitual spirit ought not to be one of doubt, but of contrition. Cultivate it ; consider for a moment what a life of ingratitude yours must seem to God, yet if you bring Him a contrite heart He asks no more ; and the spirit of contrition is

the spirit of peace ; the humble soul does not ask more. Never be disheartened ; look forward cheerfully, start afresh.

Take the fourteenth book and fifty-fourth chapter of the "Imitatio ;" it contains a categorical statement of the opposing forces of nature and of grace. There are sixteen propositions as to the working of nature as opposed to the work of grace. Draw it out in writing ; so you will have a clear picture of self as nature moves you, and of grace which fails to move you. Make use of this for self-examination, and resolution, and prayer. The fifty-fifth chapter is a prayer ; use it at least once a week. In that way you may gain a fresh flood of light to see the difference between what grace would have you be and what you are by nature, and to perceive that you are not sufficiently careful to draw to yourself God's grace and love—that you go on carelessly in natural ways.

To —.

I. Of course, wilful or known, and not made up, breaches of rule, as to examen and devotions, are "negligences" to be confessed. In sickness, the loving soul does not *neglect* them, but keeps them *as best she can*, by an act of the will, if every other power should fail. You are accepted, "according to what you have—not according to what you have not."

II. Your sense of uneasiness under omissions, and your consciousness of the *fight* to keep up your examen, are signs of God's blessed Spirit uniting with your spirit to overcome the tempter. Thank Him for such signs ; pray that you may *never* be without them, till all need for them shall be removed.

III. Impatience with the stupidity of a servant, and impatience under barrenness of spiritual condition, are the two extremes of the same line of evil—inordinate love of self. Patience is the test of unselfish love for God alone. Why is it difficult, as you say, to "rejoice" always ? Because you only then know what true joy is when you can *welcome* tribulation and privation and suffering. "For the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross." So long as you look upon loss, and trial,

and discomfort, and sorrow—as *miseries to be avoided and escaped from*, you will be a stranger to joy.

IV. Whenever you feel weary and dejected, and out of heart from any cause—besides sin—in yourself or in others, in Church or State, meditate carefully for half an hour upon the last chapter of the second book of the “*Imitatio*,” the “*Regia Via Crucis*.” God be with you. Amen.

To —.

Take three days a week for a month, and on each of these days consider, before you begin your mid-day prayers, as follows :—

I. That, notwithstanding the diversity of thoughts and opinions among men, all agree in these :

- (a) That no man is low in his own opinion of himself ;
- (b) That no one likes to yield to, or submit himself to others ;
- (c) That no one, however humble, does not think he deserves to be well thought of ;
- (d) That all are anxious to excel their neighbours ;
- “ “ to pardon their own faults ;
- “ “ not easily to pardon others ;
- “ “ to keep their own opinions ;
- “ “ to admire their own goods ;
- “ “ to approve their own plans and disparage others ;
- “ “ to make their ignorance appear wisdom, and to affect to know all when they know nothing.

This is not very wonderful, considering the selfishness of men. But—

II. It is wonderful that even *righteous* men, who seem to love God and to desire His honour above all, do secretly indulge in self-conscious thoughts, and resolve everything by an appeal to self, doing even what is right, not with the end of pleasing God, but for the enjoyment to themselves of a consciousness of duty. And the holier and higher the duty, the more subtle and *powerful* is this tendency of self-love.

III. 1. Read 1 Cor. xiii., and compare Haggai i. 6.

2. Make a confession of your life-long weakness, in respect of absolute simple love to God as a motive.

3. Make a resolution to do and bear all out of love and in forgetfulness of self.

4. Say the Collects for Whit-Sunday and Quinquagesima, and the Lord's Prayer, and the Angelus.

Most of the "spiritual letters," as they may be called, contributed to this volume, have been sent anonymously; those which follow appear to have been written to one in illness or weakness.

Of course it is possible to perform self-examination perfunctorily, so that it becomes a deceit instead of a help to the soul. But generally, certainly for you, it is a rule that in proportion as you let yourself be hindered in self-examination, so far you are not faithful to grace received. That is a practical test as to whether you are improving grace or losing it.

There are, of course, degrees of time and detail, of infirmity and occupation, into which I do not enter; many things may hinder length or detail, but the thing itself is a test by which to measure one's self. In hearing of others' unbelief, prayer for them is our own safeguard: we should think of them as withered trees, which yet may be revived by grace won by prayer.

The difficulties which have hindered you in performing your spiritual obligations were all details brought on you by Almighty God—*His* way for you. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." When He chose the house of sickness, and anxiety, and strain for you, it was *His* way; in that way He was revealing Himself. The question is, Did you take it in? Your great failing has been that, instead of opening your mouth that He might fill it, and your heart that He might come in, you were tempted to lament, to think how cut off you were from spiritual privileges. He could have brought you to more sanctity by your want of them. Be sure that He is not angry with you, but that

He is providing you with something fresh to make you sit loose to the world and all worldly things, and all the world's ways. Try and think less of difficulties and hindrances, and see only His hand in all: "him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose"—not in *your* way, but in *His* way. "Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment:" all your judgments and will must be brought under Him. So you will be able to rejoice in difficulties—the love of Him filling your heart.

Make, then, a fresh beginning of self-examination; let it be a test, not of formality, but as to your standing in the kingdom of grace. Next, look on the past as a page of holy meditation and spiritual reading, wherein to see God's choice for you. Keep it before you as His way of teaching and bringing you nearer, as being best for you—the simplest and purest indication of love. Meditate upon it, as a subject for humiliation that you were not able to take it up, but that now you will try to do so.

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There can be no doubt about one thing—that God is minded to *prove* you; as in other ways, so especially through bodily suffering and infirmity; and that, if human means fail to relieve you of it, it is because He wills the infirmity to remain. What a relief there is in this, and how it compensates for all the mistakes and false hopes of men! You are in the hands of the All-loving and the All-wise; and you are far happier to be an invalid with Him near, than to be the strongest and the ruddiest among those who are farther off from Him.

I will prepare for you, if I can, against Lent, some simple and easy exercises of the great and unspeakable grace of "*abandon*" to God. Meantime, I would advise you to lay yourself *open*, with absolute *passivity*, day by day, and every day, and all day, to all that is meant by the call to bear His will—"O God, I have now nothing to *do* but to love and bear."

Do not fidget yourself and fret because your devotions, in letter and spirit, are scantier, and poorer, and less regular and fervent than you like. This is a scare from the proud spirit of

evil. Appeal to the Spirit of good, who will reconcile you to be content to pray and to read for years without fruit, with St. Antony, and St. Francis, and St. Teresa, and St. Catherine, etc. Remember that the Holy Spirit makes more and greater saints through patience and humility, than through energy and zeal. Patient suffering in soul and body is the gate of heaven. You are brought into conformity with the risen Jesus only and in such measure as you are conformed to Him in patience under the cross.

I very lately saw a letter from a dear friend of mine, a Roman Catholic, who is a greater invalid than you just now, and entirely shut up and off from everything spiritual and temporal in the way of refreshment. I was much struck by her words, and I noted some of them for your benefit, because they seemed to me exactly what you want to hear again, and from an independent source.

"I have been now ten days without even going down to chapel (in the house) for Holy Communion. The Père M—— won't let me even speak of it as a privation—'Le bon Dieu peut bien se communiquer autrement que par le Sacrement, quand il en prive une âme. La souffrance est en elle-même un moyen d'union à Dieu;' and I feel every day the truth of what the Père says; for I have never been more completely shut out from everything, even from reading; and I have never been happier. There seems nothing in the world left for me but to desire to love God better. The Père came to me the other day and told me he thought I must resign myself to not going out at all, but to keep my *cellule* through the winter. 'Vous mènerez un peu la vie d'un Chartreux; qu'est ce que vous pouvez demander de mieux?' he said with a radiant look, as if it were the brightest and happiest life possible; and he left me feeling as if it were. Everything in life may be made use of, as means towards *the* end, that is, the service and glory of God; and an indication of the Divine will that one thing may be more a means than another thing is the only reason for a preference. So, if ill health is more a means to *the* end, one prefers it, or, as the Père Provincial once said to me, "If it seems God's will to draw you close to Himself *par la voie des privations dans les choses spirituelles*, even the



privation becomes, in a way, sweeter than the abundance would be.' They always say in public troubles, 'Le bon Dieu est toujours là ; tenons nous prêts à tout, faisons ce que nous pouvons pour éloigner le mal ; et Dieu saura bien tirer sa gloire de tout ce qui arrive.' Père M—— always says, 'Pray and prepare, but do not trouble. Il ne faut pas vouloir *presser* le bon Dieu,' and this quiets me when I get impatient."

These words signify the same thing that I have very often urged upon you, but I send them because they come from an independent source, and are very comforting. Whenever you are tempted to impatience say, "Il ne faut pas vouloir presser le bon Dieu."

God ever bless and keep you.

What I seem to see about that passage of your life is that there was an inordinate strain on your physical powers, and that there was not in you that patience and submission, and open-mouthed receptivity, which there ought to have been. It was His providence which brought the greater strain upon you, and there was not a responsive readiness on your part. Indeed, what we should try for when He visits us within or without, by sickness in ourselves or in others, by temptation or desolation or barrenness, is to aim at stirring up an answer of patience and love like Job's "Though He slay me," etc. And what seems to me is that you are chiefly wanting in simplicity of patient waiting on God. Your natural activity of character leads you to be anxious to compass even the best ends in some other way than His. But we are safest when the expression of our heart is, "I will lie still." Your natural impulse is to do something active to compass what you think within reach, when it may not be so, and that has a tendency to bring you into collision with God instead of into harmony with Him. The simplicity of patience touches the depth of your difficulties. The tendency to speak rashly of others arises from the same cause ; not, God forbid, from malice or unlove, but from a restless activity wanting to make everything square with your

own views. And so, dear——, there is a continual tendency to relax your rule, partly from a strain on your physical powers, which I think you might sometimes avoid by husbanding them better, so as to be ready for spiritual things. It is much more important to be ready for spiritual reading and other obligations, than to do many things. Sometimes you cannot help it, and then you must offer it to God.

Next, there is a want of simple patience in your attitude of mind. Most of all, the old taint of self-love, that root of bitterness in so many of us, making us speak rashly of others. If we had always before us a sense of our own vileness we could not feel inclined to speak so of others.

Take the thirty-fourth Psalm with this spiritual intention. The keynote and burden of that Psalm is, "Come, ye children," etc. Let then that be the aim of your soul, to learn more deeply and truly what the fear of the Lord is. To put it in a practical form: we may see one way in guarding the tongue. "What man is he . . . let him refrain his tongue from evil." And then, "seek peace and ensue it." Make a little meditation on those two words, "peace" and "ensue." Peace with God, with yourself, with your neighbour. Seek them as an evidence of the fear of the Lord—not a slavish fear, but a filial fear, bringing peace with Him, and yourself, and others. There can be none without a guarded tongue. Censure of others, and, still worse, inaccurate words or unloving words of others, are all hindrances to peace; avoid all evil-speaking. And then ensue, *i.e.* pursue. St. Paul uses the latter word, which is what ensue means. Pursue, follow after peace; run after it as something which is running away from you. In company occasions arise of losing it, but do not let it go; run after it till you find it, and then hold it fast.

Of course, dear——, there is no difficulty in spotting the weak place; you say, and rightly, that there must be something very wrong when you get upset in any strain. What is this wrong? It is very simple and plain—that you are too intent on doing what your conscience tells you you have to do as to rule, etc., and

forget to *bear*. Yet where you fail in doing may be nothing ; you may be disabled, may be hindered by exhaustion from fulfilling your rule. God may in His providence take away from you the power of *doing*, but He never takes from you the power of *bearing*. And there is where you fail. The secret of your failure lies in a small compass : you do not make the most of your infirmities. In time of strain you struggle instead of bearing and saying, "It is better for me." Your impulse is to look out for human sympathy. When He sends a strain it is part of His will, and so His discipline for you ; but you do not utilize your sufferings, and so you lose profit ; you are bent on self rather than on His will ; you want to be free from trouble instead of accepting it. I do not know whether it would have been possible at —, but your *perfection* would have been to have said nothing, and laid it before God. That lies at the bottom of almost all amiss in your spiritual life, an absorbing interest in self, and that you may be an object of interest to others. Also, there is an absence of humility, there is pride—for humility and patience are sisters. If you were really patient you had rather bear them that others should be troubled.

Take a note of this :—that what you have to watch against is giving way to impulse in thought, word, and deed. Watch against acting, speaking, or thinking, or writing on the impulse of the moment, without weighing consequences both to yourself and to others.

Next as to your rule ; be more taken up with the duty of bearing than of doing. God calls you rather to the passive than to the active in the spiritual life ; perhaps because He sees it is harder to you to *bear* well than to *do* well, and so His vocation for you is to bear rather than to do. You have more to do in bearing than in any other form of obedience to His will.

Take as a general law to strive for gladness, and joy, and brightness in fulfilling your part. Put down gloom and despair ; be more glad at *contretemps* than at success, because better for you.

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It is a strange mystery (the depths of which we shall never know till the manifestation of all things), that many, to whom we might probably with confidence impute an almost certainty of calm and reposeful faith and hope and love, in the midst of the final struggle which waits upon the passing soul, are then beset with horrible fears and doubts which often express themselves in heartrending cries of distress, amounting sometimes to despair. These phenomena are no measure, happily, of the soul's acceptance with Him, who knows its every pulse, with a certainty which cannot err. Physical disease will often account for much, a nervous temperament for more; but, after all, there is no account to be given of it, except the permission of God, who is often pleased in this way to bring those whom He most loves and draws closest to Himself into real contact with the full mystery of suffering, in order for their more perfect entrance into joy. "*As My Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you,*" is the measure of God's love to the elect soul. Well, we know that the Father's love for Jesus was through such suffering, in the foretaste of death, as found expression in "strong crying and tears," and that Jesus was "heard in that He *feared*."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### VISIT TO THE EAST.

1853-1855.

' Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells,  
Here grow no damned grudges ; here are no storms,  
No noise, but Silence and Eternal Sleep."

THE winter of 1853-4 was happily spent at Clifton, but in the early spring of 1854 Mr. Skinner had a dangerous attack of pleurisy which deprived him of the little strength he had gained. His kind friend at St. Paul's writes to him at this time :

36, Wilton Crescent, April 6, 1854.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

From excessive press of business at this critical time, I have delayed answering your very touching letter longer than I could have wished ; and now my answer must, of necessity, be brief ; much briefer than I desire in writing to you, my dear friend, for I should like to have a long conversation with you after so long an intermission of communication between us.

It is unspeakably distressing to me to be obliged to say that for your own *health*, perhaps I ought to say your *life's* sake, I cannot consent to your doing *any duty whatever* at St. Barnabas' at present. My authority for speaking so positively is contained in the enclosed note from Dr. Chapman, which I will ask you to return to me when you have perused it. . . .

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I would fervently pray to be enabled to see God's hand in reference to your condition, and to follow His guidance.

If we both are alike influenced by a simple-hearted desire to *do* right, to do His will, let us be assured, my dear brother, that He will provide. I cannot see my way at present further than to say, "Come back to your home at St. Barnabas' when you feel you can do so with safety and convenience." For the rest, let us wait for God's good providence to lead us, for indeed it is an occasion for putting to the test our Blessed Saviour's words, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Be assured that, under any circumstances, I shall not cease to feel the warmest affection towards you, and to make any efforts in my power to lighten your cross. Give my kindest regards to dear Mrs. Skinner, and believe me, my dear Skinner,

Your faithful and affectionate brother in the Lord,

ROBERT LIDDELL.

Rev. James Skinner.

It was ever necessary, through life, to hold him back by positive injunctions, for the moment he recovered from the severity of illness, his desire to be at work persuaded him that he was capable of it. He returned to St. Barnabas' in the middle of April, for Easter, but was unable even to go into church for a month after he reached home, and then only in an invalid chair to receive the Blessed Sacrament. Yet he rallied in a measure, mostly through force of will, preaching on St. Barnabas' Day, the first time for a year, and taking a fair share of work during the summer. But at times he was quite unfit for it, his feeble condition causing the gravest anxiety to his friends, and as autumn advanced his doctors pronounced an entire rest from work and change of climate for the winter necessary for the preservation of his life. It was arranged that he should make a tour in the East, the climate of Egypt and the Desert being

recommended ; and Mr. Liddell, kind as ever, consented to this second long absence on the part of his senior curate, in the hope of eventually retaining him at St. Barnabas'.

On October 20 he sailed from Southampton to Alexandria, circumstances obliging him to undergo the trial of separation from his wife, who remained in charge of the children and household at St. Barnabas'. He encountered an awful storm in the Mediterranean, the same which during the Crimean War wrought havoc among the ships in the Black Sea.

After describing in a letter from Malta a terrible hurricane in the Bay of Biscay, he writes from Alexandria, November 4, 1854 :

And now begins, or rather continues, the thread of my misery, spun out shortly but strongly in that scrap from Malta. All the horrors of the voyage, begun on the second day after entering the Mediterranean, were now repeated with compound interest. The ship rolled and tossed, and tossed and rolled, and creaked and shook, as if she would go to pieces every instant. The hurricane continued on and on, and we continued on our course, struggling *against* it ; as if, though other ships put back, there were nothing for *us* to fear. It was the very "Euroclydon" which shipwrecked St. Paul ; and as we passed under the lee of Crete, and drove our heads against the blast which pierced the way where "two seas meet," I thought of the blessed apostle, and of the Providence which watched over him, and I prayed that though haply there might be none among us such as he, for whose sake all the other lives were given, yet the same protecting Spirit might not fail us in our need. I spent all my time, night and day, in prayer. I was too faint to speak, and too ill to unclothe my eyes ; but fixed my inner eye steadfastly upon our only and alone Captain and Saviour, and said thousands of times, "O Saviour of the world, who by Thy cross and precious blood has redeemed us,

save us and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord !” It was an awful time. First, we lost our jibboom and top-gallant halliards ; then our whole figure-head and all the forepart of the exterior ship was wrenched off. Then the captain was thrown off the foreccastle and his arm dislocated. Then about midnight, when the ship was rolling fearfully, and everything on every side was falling to pieces, with deafening noise there came a tremendous sea, washing clean over the ship and filling almost every cabin with water, and an awful yell of agony—“*murder.*” I jumped up with all the fresh life and energy which imminent danger lends for the moment, to ascertain what had befallen us. A poor fellow, a seaman, had been knocked down by the sea, and both his legs fearfully shattered to pieces. Then the horses on board, one after another, knocked to bits, died, and were thrown overboard. And so we went on hardly existing—the cabin full of water ; my very bed drenched—till on the eighth day God had pity, and stayed the stormy sea, and “delivered us out of our distress ;” “for *He* maketh the storm to cease, so that the waves thereof are still.”

That wonderful psalm, read in church when I was being tossed in the Bay of Biscay on the 22nd, and when you were so anxiously thinking of me, has been much in my thoughts.

Cairo, November 16, 1854.

. . . I was very glad to leave Alexandria, although I had a satisfactory sojourn there. I completed all my investigations, and finished off with a visit to the Bishop and Metropolitan of the Coptic Church. He was very civil, and *as* communicative as ignorance and habit combined ever allow these men to be. He answered all my questions, but suggested no information himself. I carried on my conversation through an interpreter, for he knew no language but his own. I smoked a most delicious pipe with him, a pipe of the finest Latakia, and drank some of the richest coffee I ever tasted ; and so took leave.

I also visited all the Roman Missions in Alexandria, and entered into all the minute details of their extraordinary work. I was received with the greatest kindness, alike by the Brothers,



and the Sisters of the Orders who are there ; and never was more pleased with anything, or more thankful that God had His instruments for *every* part of His work for our souls, and was using them, each according to its separate adaptation, to the end. The Romanists are apparently the *only* body of Christians in Egypt doing anything : the poor Copts, besides being as deeply stained with the Monophysite heresy as they were when first it was invented, are in a state of absolute degradation and powerlessness ; the Catholics are inert, and lethargic, and asleep ; and we English are worse than dead. There is a fitful, irregular, feverish stirring among the American sects, who are sending missionaries ; but they vapour and smoke, and then their work comes to naught.

Cairo, November 29, 1854.

. . . To-day I have been a long ride to Rhoda Island. Nothing can give you an idea of the surpassing beauty of the day, or of the scenery ! The setting sun on the vast pyramids of Ghezeh, behind the cluster of lofty and graceful palms which skirt the bank of the royal river, was a sight never to be forgotten. This Rhoda is celebrated for a very ancient Nilometer—an instrument for measuring the height of the inundations, which has been in use for more than two thousand years. It is the place preserved by tradition as that wherein the daughter of Pharaoh discovered the infant Moses. . . .

I am going to-morrow to visit the traditionary chamber where dwelt the Holy Family when they “came down into Egypt.” It is some four miles off ; and also, in another direction, the sycamore tree, under which they rested with the Holy Child on their weary way. Every step in this country is full of interest ; for either one is treading the ground whereon saints and God’s servants of old have walked, or gazing upon the same objects as the most renowned beings and the most gifted philosophers of heathendom were familiar with. . . .

I paid a visit of three hours the day before yesterday to the Coptic Patriarch, and had a long and intensely interesting discussion. He is to give me letters commendatory to the Bishops

of Upper Egypt. On Sunday I visited the Greek church and convent; also the Syrian and Franciscan (Latin). I am going to visit the Greek Patriarch, and the Armenian also. . . .

This is a wonderful time among the Mahomedans. The pilgrims have just come in from Mecca, and the religious ceremonies consequent on that event keep the whole city in an uproar from morning to night. It gives me an impression of depth in degradation, to which I had no conception human nature, in any part of God's earth, had ever fallen.

Eshneh, Upper Nile, December, 1854.

Thank God, I am excellently well! I hardly ever felt better in my life, and this magnificent climate just suits me: it has already made a new man of me, though I am but one quarter of my time in it. I have gained greatly in strength and in flesh, and am, in fact, with my beard and moustache, more like a great stalwart heavy dragoon, than the poor half-starved-looking parson you used to know.

March 5, 1855.

Our last day in Cairo was a busy one. Breakfast was got over before eight, and by nine we were waiting by appointment for his Holiness the Orthodox Patriarch in his episcopal palace. The Rev. William W. Ewbank and the Rev. G. P. Badger were with me. The former is Incumbent of St. George's, Everton, near Liverpool—an able and zealous worker in his own sphere; a large-hearted and affectionate soul without a spark of party spirit. We are wide of each other on a great many theological subjects of the deepest interest; but where love is, differences earnestly and honestly held do but gender mutual respect.

After waiting an hour, the Patriarch's arrival was announced. We descended from the secretary's room to meet him, and found him waiting in the court below. He was very courteous and civil, and showed the way through a suite of very comfortable apartments to a handsome receiving-room furnished with luxurious divans, where the never-failing chibouque with sweetmeats and coffee were served. The interview was summed up by a request

for letters introductory to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, which were granted at once, and we took our leave.

Then, a visit to the Consulate, and the usual preliminary arrangements of passport *visé*, etc., and we reached our hotel and relapsed into the throes of packing. We were not fairly off till four o'clock in the afternoon; then, drawn up before the Oriental Hotel, an imposing cavalcade—eleven camels with as many Arabs, tents, water-casks, provision crates, and packages without end—we were the observed of all our friends, who gathered in force to see us start and bid us a cordial adieu.

And now the first difficulty was over: the three formidable plunges of the rising camel—each of which seems to promise inevitable dislocation and a public discomfiture—were accomplished, and we were moving majestically along the Usbequieh as if we had been born children of the desert, and the heaving motion of this "desert ship" were second nature.

I can tell you, however, it is far otherwise. I never felt more uncomfortable or less at home in my life. The *pitch* with which the brute hauls up his off-legs after he has spread out his near ones, is exactly like the rolling of a ship in a ground swell. Mrs. Ewbank is on a donkey, and a famous donkey it will be if it contrives to survive this long desert journey and reach the Promised Land.

March 6.

By noon we reached a shady rock and dismounted to refresh ourselves and rest. No one but soon learns in this land what that meaneth—"The shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land." But the slowness of our progress admitted of little indulgence in that way. The point is first to make out the day, and then to rest. Of all intermediate stoppages camels and Arabs and servants are alike impatient. Indeed, it is a weary work at best; every bone aches, every nerve is on the stretch. Ewbank bears it more bravely than I. There he sits upon his camel as airily and lightly as if bone-breaking were nothing; while I am a perfect wonder to behold, with a series of endless folds of muslin girded

round my body for support—swathed like a mummy. I am certain he will not endure to the end as well as I; for there is hardly anything so important against the motive evil of camel-riding as this precaution of support.

March 7.

The wind has changed its quarter, and though the sun is stronger the breeze is fresher, and we set out in good heart and spirits.

Presently we entered Wady Digheleh—a narrow defile between the broken rocks, full of shrubs and thistles and bright little flowers which seem to “waste their sweetness on the desert air;” and yet “waste” is not the word, for the camels find in them many a cherished morsel. It is, however, a great addition to the tedium of the way, that no flower or shrub is allowed to escape us; the camels are diligently led up to each and invited to regale themselves.

March 8.

We started this morning at eight, having breakfasted, as before, in the open air. Mutton chops, poached eggs, and rolls with butter, and preserved limes and oranges. Of course we carry with us our own commissariat; and unhappy cocks and hens, with a supply of turkeys for Sundays, are at once our *compagnons de voyage*, and the victims on whom we prey.

To-day we traversed a magnificent and extensive plain. Here we fancied the “harnessed” ranks of the hosts of Israel toiling on in the burning sun, commanded by the keen eye of their inspired leader, undimmed by the long use of eighty years; and we tried to picture to ourselves the magnificence which a whole nation slowly marching down this valley must needs have added to the view. The tread of many feet—the sound of many waters—and the banners of the tribes of the house of God following the awful cloud in front—never lost to sight—yet never seen by all at once—winding round and round—endless from the multitude of souls—endless from the turnings of the valley—and the bones of Joseph swelling out the mighty procession into the magnificent ceremonial

of an Eastern funeral. Flowers of every hue, and sweet herbs of varied fragrance, lent their enchantment to the picture.

March 12.

Ewbank had an unquiet night, and is not feeling very well ; but whether from indifferent water, or the camel motion, or both, his feelings are the common lot of desert travellers ; few make so light of them as he.

March 17.

To-day is an unexpected day of rest. Poor Ewbank was with difficulty persuaded to make it so ; he was so unwilling to be a clog to our progress. "Do not have the baggage-caravan sent off this morning, till you hear further," was Mrs. Ewbank's early message to me ; and I had no need to be assured of the absolute necessity of a pause. It is a hard trial to be laid up in this wilderness of Sin—far from medical aid and the common comforts of home.

March 18.

Another day of rest. Poor Ewbank goes on very badly, and his wife having done her utmost came to me. Alas, poor souls ! what can they do ? I am the sole being in this wide wilderness to whom they can look, under God, for help and sympathy ; and I must not shrink from using such remedies as I have. I took my globules and tinctures, and administered them, after all the study I could apply, according to Hering's book ; but I have far more confidence in the prayer which I most earnestly offered up to God for my poor friend.

On the north border of the valley, as we rest here, rises Gebel Nazareen, and I aspired to stand upon his heights, and see the sunset over Serbâl. It was a much more difficult and hazardous undertaking than I supposed. Once on the summit, the reward is full. There to the east, over a thousand subject pyramids, rise high the massive towers of "the Mount of God ;" and ever as the sun declines in the opposite horizon, the shadows flit here and there, and rise and fall. All the brightest and deepest

hues gather in upon his breast, and gleaming with a vast unearthly light, half dazzle one with beauty, half awe with fear. Then it flashes across my mind that on those very heights "they saw the God of Israel, and there was under His feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in His clearness." I sat down and gazed till all was dark once more upon his lofty brow.

March 19, 20, 21.

Here we are still. Three days more have passed, and we may not yet so much as think of striking our tents and moving on. Poor Ewbank goes on as badly as possible, and we are utterly alone in this desert, with no human aid at hand. Fever keeps his pulse up to a persevering range of 102 to 120, all the most alarming symptoms continue—what will be the issue God only knows. I have great faith in this most delicious and salutary air; indeed, but for the sorrow which causes it, I could not but accept this rest for myself as one of the best things that could have happened; for day succeeds day in the same unbroken, changeless line of brilliant skies and soft invigorating breezes, and the life which one leads, houseless, beneath this firmament of gorgeous blue, has a charm of health about it which they who only know the March winds of England cannot understand; and so, if only poor dear Ewbank were round the corner, I should hope the very best for him from the mere climate. But when this round shall be made, or, if made, when his worn and exhausted frame shall be able to endure our only instrument of locomotion—the slow, tedious, rolling, bone-breaking camel—is more than I can say.

March 22, 23, 24.

Three days more in this vale of sorrow—for so, indeed, it is to us. Poor Ewbank is still as ill as he can be, and I fear he is growing weaker daily, and the power of rallying gradually lessens. He is even cheerful in the midst of suffering, and does not apprehend danger; he buoys himself up with hope; but I have my own misgivings, and I am inclined to think that he himself

has more doubts than he chooses to express—his hopefulness is for the sake of others. He lives upon the hope of reaching the convent. "My chief earthly hope now," he says, "is that I may get to the convent;" and as we are sending off Hussein to get from the worthy monks a few necessities which our prolonged delay has exhausted, I think I may as well suggest the possibility of their sending us a litter. I have no hope of being able to use it, for his feebleness and exhaustion forbid the very thought of motion. But I wrote as follows, only the language which I used was Italian—I was afraid of venturing my Greek :—

"Wadi Firau, March 24, 1855.

"To the Most Rev. the Archimandrite of the Convent of  
Mount Sinai.

"MOST REVEREND FATHER,

"I take the liberty of apprising you of our present unfortunate situation, because I am well assured that, of your Christian charity, you will do all you can for our assistance.

"We are three English travellers journeying from Cairo, by the desert of Sinai, to Jerusalem. One of us is a lady, and the two others are priests of the English Church, travelling for the benefit of broken health.

"The lady is the wife of one of us, who, most unfortunately, has been seized in this valley with grievous sickness; and not only has our progress been hindered here for a whole week, but the natural strength of our traveller is so reduced, that when we shall be able to proceed it is impossible to say.

"In this sad misfortune, we beseech you, most reverend father, to send us, according to your ability, whatever is wanting to our needs. Especially, we pray for twenty loaves of bread; and if there be anything else suitable for a sick person which you can send us in this emergency, we shall be for ever grateful.

"Finally, most reverend father, we shall greatly rejoice if you can suggest any mode of transport less difficult and uneasy for an invalid than the restless camel. If any sort of carriage could be fitted up of wood, upon which the bed of our sufferer might rest,

and so, by soft and slow degrees, he could be brought to your hospitable gate, it will not be necessary to assure you of our everlasting obligation.

“I am always, with the highest consideration,

“Your most humble and obliged servant in Christ,

“JAMES SKINNER.”

My poor friend is glad to hear what has been done; but I observe a greater amount of fever, and an unconsciousness of time which I have not noticed before. In the afternoon, towards four o'clock, I always have a little “service” with him. I say a short psalm, and read a few verses from Holy Scripture; after which I pray for Him, and then, rising from my knees, I bless him with “the laying on of hands,” committing him to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with Whom, be the end life or death, he is safe. He longs for this little “service” as *the* event of the day. To-day he asked, “Is it four o'clock yet?” when as yet it was hardly one. It is very touching to see his worn features lit up with the spirit of devotion, and his poor head raised from its uneasy pillow to receive the blessing.

March 25, 26.

All our waiting is over! Our prayers are answered otherwise than we had deemed—still they are answered for good as God knows best. Our dear friend has passed to another “Jerusalem” than that our toilsome pilgrimage along this valley had in view.

Saturday night was a time of much uneasiness and suffering; and early yesterday morning the conviction seized Mrs. Ewbank that her beloved husband could not struggle through. She consulted me, and I could not say that I differed from her. It was not a difficult task to express our convictions to him; secretly, I believe, he had shared them for some time; and he had that sense of death always upon him, which made him always ready to die. And yet he was so genuine and true to nature, that he could pretend to nothing which was not thoroughly real. His *own* wish would



have been to live on ; but he was glad to do the will of God ; and so he expressed himself to me, and made my office easy, when I had to speak of setting his earthly things in order.

After a time I had my "service" with him ; and then he asked me to read some poetry to him. He asked for the "Christian Year," and I repeated the hymn for the day—

"The Historic Muse, from age to age,  
Through many a waste heart-sickening page  
Hath traced the works of man ;  
But a celestial call to-day  
Stays her, like Moses, on her way,  
The works of God to scan."

Then came the night—the trying night ; it was the last ! And now the struggle is over, and he is where mortal sorrow is unknown. Oh, most wonderful dispensation of the providence of God ! Journeying through Europe, in weak but renovated health, he had reached Egypt in December, with every assurance that all was prospering with the object for which he had quitted home. In Alexandria, though prostrated by a fit of his accustomed asthma, he soon rallied again, and proceeding up the Nile, by steamer, as far as Assouan, had returned to Cairo, with every sign of a fixed and steady improvement upon him. I was seeking a companion for the desert by Sinai and Nachl—so was he ; and we joined our arrangements together, as far as Jerusalem. Never did a party start for this long, somewhat fatiguing, but usually invigorating tour in better condition and spirits than we. If any one of us excelled the other in strength, it seemed certainly to be he who is now in the midst of us a corpse. And his broken-hearted widow sits by my side ; and with her and God I am alone in this valley of desolation.

This morning I came to him at one ; he was then struggling for life. The residue of his strength amazed me ; it seemed as if there might be hours of struggling before him. At half-past two I came again, and never left him more. The time was spent in prayer. At five minutes past five he whispered to me, "Now it's coming !" then, the last heave of waning life—and he was gone.

I closed his eyes in peace ; and of all his bright and sweet and winning example, there was an end.

The burning mid-day suns of Arabia leave no choice of hours between the two final steps in the history of man. It was a horrid thing to bury him, all alone and unshaded, in the waste "howling wilderness," but before the scorching sun was over the horizon, I set out in search of a burial-place for his remains.

Alas ! for an hour I wandered up and down, and no safe place appeared. At length Toolisman, our most ancient Arab, the driver of *his* camel (as if that closer personal connection had entitled him to be "eyes to us" in this perplexing darkness), suggested a secret cave at some distance to the south. "It was," he said, "a hiding-place for corn and other provisions, but it has long since been disused in these peaceful days ; it is perfectly safe, and none will disturb him there." So off we hurried, without loss of time, following Toolisman ; and there, midway in a mountain, where we hope no beast of the wilderness can reach, or storm dislodge, his bones, I fixed to have him laid.

A long and weary morning, hot and sultry, is passing now. The feverish anxiety of the past night is pressing heavily on us both, and we are waiting, solemnly and thoughtfully, for the evening cool. Then the mournful cavalcade must go forth ; and all uncoffined we shall commit to the rock, with blessed words, all that remains of as sweet and gentle a servant of God as ever fell to my lot to see.

March 27.

All unwillingly the hard-natured Arabs lent an assistance I could have too gladly spared, had there been any more feeling hearts or readier hands at my command. Their sheikh away on his mission to the convent, the accustomed voice of command was wanting, and, moreover, there was the difficulty of overcoming a religious scruple.

The body was soon prepared—for it is due to Arminius, our Coptic dragoman, to say that no efforts of his were wanting to fulfil my wishes—and then, all swathed in his sheet, and laid upon

the iron bedstead, and decently covered with the counterpane, we raised the dear burden upon the shoulders of the Arabs, and the mournful procession left the camp. It comforts me to think that, though contrary to our notions of reverent decency at home, a coffinless sepulture is true to Eastern usage, and to the most precious precedents.

Mrs. Ewbank was able by this time to raise her head, and the very exertion of discharging the last earthly duty of a wife now left to her seemed a grateful relief. We followed the bier at a distance, for the desert is rough and stony, and the Arabs' step was fleet. Little passed between us in words.

Then we arrived at the cave, partly dug out of the rock, and partly built up with dark red sandstone, with an aperture just large enough for one man to enter.

The body was laid close under this aperture. I beckoned the Moslem savages to retire out of sight while the broken heart of the poor widow vented its fulness in the last gaze upon what remained of her departed treasure. Then we gently and slowly unbound the body from the bier and laid it in the cave, with its face on the forward journey toward "Jerusalem." The widow, our dragoman, and I stood by the door, while I read the service of the Church.

One long look more, as he lay all peacefully within this "new tomb hewn in the rock," asleep in Him who so was laid before him, and then the Arabs built up the aperture with great stones and cement of sand and water, and the tomb was "sealed" till the "day of refreshing" dawned.

I am in an exhausted state, and must not entertain the notion of proceeding onward through the desert—sixteen sad days more—to Jerusalem; although the poor widow would gladly accomplish what had so absorbed *him* from the first. I dread my own failing by the way, and I have no security for her holding out.

March 28.

Yesterday afternoon, after all arrangements were made to start on the morrow, I heard a rumour of a caravan approaching,

and soon Messrs. Drummond and Gott arrived. They were the first European faces I had seen since I quitted Cairo, and never was the sight of an Englishman so welcome to my eyes. A few words sufficed for explaining our position, and then all was kindness and sympathy at their hands.

This morning we were off by eight o'clock. The heat of the air was stifling, and all was depressing as we quitted this desolate valley, part of which is the oasis of Sinai. God knows it has been a wilderness to us! Every step of the road has a familiar aspect, but all too melancholy—bound up with him who is gone from us, who, but three weeks ago, passed onward with us—the life of our expectation.

March 29.

On the move at half-past eight; before two in the afternoon we were once more upon the shores of the Red Sea.

March 31.

All yesterday was spent in hopeless expectation. A burning sun overhead, and the reflected heat of sand and sea, made our tents all but unendurable.

Another hour on the hot sand, and many wistful and searching looks across and up the gulf satisfy us that some mistake there must be, and that waiting longer we shall only waste our precious time and wear our slender strength.

So by noon we are once more mounted and under motion, toiling on at our wonted pace, over that too familiar ground, the pain of which we had thus vainly striven to avoid.

The mournful party at length reached Suez, and were obliged by fatigue to remain there during Holy Week.

I never spent such a Holy Week before. If it were right, I would pray that I might never spend such a one again. But God knows what is best for each of us, and we are safest when we submit patiently and thankfully to Him. Our Easter Day was spent on the beaten track between Suez and Cairo, and we did our best to keep it holy, with the deep marks of His visitation

fresh upon our souls. One night in Cairo for rest, and then at Alexandria I had the comfort of committing my broken-hearted charge to tried friends, to return with them to England, while I took my place by the steamer for Jaffa.

We had an indifferent passage, but were off Jaffa by three o'clock on the second day from Alexandria. Owing to the tremendous surf which was beating against the open roadstead, no one would venture out to take us ashore. We were not able to land till the next morning, and got ashore in the midst of four or five hundred pilgrims, returning from the Holy City about eight in the morning. There are no hotels in Jaffa, except one miserable khan, kept by a Jew, a wretched place, though wonderfully picturesque as seen from the sea. I happened to have a parcel in charge for the missionary of the Church Missionary Society station theré, so I resolved to impose myself on him.

Mr. Cayley (son of one of the Yorkshire M.P.'s), an excellent Arab scholar, and dressed in the costume of the country, offered to act as my dragoman, on condition that I would take him with me to the missionary's: so I agreed, and off we sallied, with a score of picturesque porters carrying our baggage; and threading some of the dirtiest streets in the world, we reached the Rev. Padre's just as he was getting up his Arabic sermon (it was Sunday) for an early service. His pleasant and good-natured wife soon appeared with an invitation to partake of coffee, for which we were quite ready.

The missionary left for his service, and then we sat down in a little humble, uncarpeted, stone-ceiled room, and made ourselves very happy over excellent coffee and sweet bread and butter. I then lay down to rest for half an hour, and afterwards joined in the English service at eleven o'clock. The worthy divine read the service in his little chapel very reverently in the presence of his wife and child and myself and two servants; there was also the consul's governess. This formed the congregation. This missionary had no surplice, nor distinctive dress of any kind. But in spite of this, it was such a comfort to me as I can never tell. To worship once more with fellow-Christians in a place set apart

for God, was a blessing I could not measure so as even to *think* of it adequately, much less speak of it to another. The missionary's wife played the organ in the little chapel room, and we sang a dear old familiar psalm-tune, and I felt as if my heart would burst as I recounted God's special mercies to me through that month, which seemed a year of sorrow. We were invited to partake of the simple dinner after service, and by the time that was over the mule-drivers came round about the premises and urged us to our departure.

Our way lay through groves of cactus in full golden blossom and forests of orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees. Then we emerged into the plains of Sharon, and my eyes feasted upon the brilliant green of rich cornfields—a feast for which the long use of the barren desert had prepared them—with a relish altogether unknown to my fellow-travellers. We were a party of four—a German, a Welshman, Cayley, and myself.

By-and-by, as the sun went down, we reached the charming village of Ramleh, and stopped at the Latin convent. The fine old monk who opened the great gate for us, made us most welcome; asked no questions about our faith; inquired simply from what province—"da che provincia"—we came, and then showed the way up a long winding stair, and through an ample court shaded with orange trees, to our cells. . . .

We were off next morning by cock-crow. The passage from Ramleh to Jerusalem lies over the mountains, and is just as *vicious* a specimen of an impassable country as I ever trod upon. Huge rocks and stones lie across the path at every turn, and it is impossible to advance on the swiftest horse beyond the pace of a mile an hour.

After five or six hours of desperate fatigue, through which we began to disbelieve the existence of Jerusalem, so far remote it seemed, and so like a phantom which escapes as you approach, we, at weary length, came in sight of the city walls. We had passed Emmaus—or what is taken for it—and Kirjath-jearim, whither the Ark was brought, and then came suddenly down upon the Valley of Gihon.

Down far on the left was the Valley of Hinnom—beautiful with a beauty all its own—of green foliage and grey rock mixed, and betokening nothing of the horrors of Tophet, with which every one doubtless invests it who thinks only of Moloch and the sacrifices offered at his shrine.

And now we were through the Hebron or Jaffa Gate, and within the city. Much as my mind had yielded itself to the *first* indescribable impressions of the City of Peace and its associations, *now* they quite vanished, and I was overwhelmed by two miserable sublunary anxieties—how I should keep my seat among such broken pavement and avoid tumbling in the dirt; and next, how I should ever find a habitable quarter amid such wretchedness and filth! However, I got over both these anxieties, and found comfortable quarters at this hotel, and a host of friends whom I had met in Egypt.

. . . I cannot now enter into what I have seen here, and what I think. All is uncertainty on *every* subject. I wander along the Valley of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom, and climb the Mount of Olivet, and linger amid the trees of Gethsemane, sure that there, at least, I am safe in treasuring up the most blessed associations vouchsafed to man. But all the absurd traditions of *this* being the spot of the “Ecce Homo,” and *that* the house of Dives, etc., etc., are only painful in the extreme. The site of Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre also, *if it be true*, is sadly profaned by the bitter hostilities of the rival Christian bodies, who congregate around it, and whose utter disorder and irreverence must be the subject of Moslem pity, as it is of every earnest Christian’s deep and unutterable disgust. . . .\*

In a letter from Alexandria on his return from the Holy Land, he says—

May 18, 1855.

I joined a Quaker for my travelling associate, a Mr. Fox, and we made the whole tour of Palestine in company. He was a

\* During his stay at Jerusalem Mr. Skinner sat to Holman Hunt, at the artist’s request, for a sketch of one of the Rabbi in the “Finding in the Temple.”

very intelligent person, and I had great pleasure in his society ; but it is a somewhat curious circumstance that I should never have been able, all through, to find anybody to travel with exactly like-minded with myself. Perhaps this has been for my good, and I have learnt to value and estimate more highly the good which is to be found where I have perhaps been too little accustomed to look for it. The first journey we took was over the Mount of Olives to Bethany, and so on, across the hill country of Judæa, to Jericho. This was a way full of danger, and we had a special armed guard to protect us against robbers. We passed through the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan, which retains to this day its reputation for the haunts of hard and cruel bandits. On the plains of Jericho we encamped, a large party ; and next day started for the Jordan, where we bathed ; and then reached the Dead Sea, into whose waters we also plunged, and experienced the most unpleasant sensations possible. We spent that night in the rocky convent of Mar Saba, far up among the mountains, where John Damascene and Cyril of Jerusalem lived and died ; and next day proceeded to Bethlehem.

A day or two more at Jerusalem sufficed for a rest, and then we set out finally for the north. First, to Bethel, and then to Sychar and Samaria ; then across the plain of Jezreel (so associated with all history, from David down to the Crusades) to Nazareth, where, in a convent, we spent a charming evening and night. Nazareth is the sweetest village, with the handsomest peasantry, I ever remember to have seen. Thence we ascended Mount Tabor, and the same day made our entrance into Tiberias by the soft blue Lake of Gennesaret. We explored Bethsaida and Capernaum, and made a day of it to Cana of Galilee, where we pitched our tent. Next day we passed down the lovely plain of Zabulon, and arrived at Carmel, where, on the summit of a mountain, we took up our quarters with the brethren of the convent. On the morrow we reached St. Jean d'Acre, and so on to Tyre. Another day brought us to Sidon, then to Beyrout, and then the French steamer to Alexandria, whence I now write. . . .



## CHAPTER IX.

### LAST DAYS AT ST. BARNABAS'.

1855-1857.

"I argue not  
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope ; but still bear up, and steer  
Right onward."

ST. BARNABAS' DAY, 1855, was indeed a joyful time to the family at the parsonage, since just before the festival they had the happiness of welcoming back the husband, father, and brother, apparently entirely restored to health and vigour, ready and eager to throw himself again into work.

During his visit to Egypt, he had made the acquaintance of the Archbishop of Malabar, who was thinking of making a visit to England upon some matters connected with the interests of his flock at Malabar, the descendants of a flourishing Nestorian community, but not now themselves in formal heresy. Mr. Skinner gave him letters to several people in England who might be of service to him, expressed a hope that he would not forget to pay St. Barnabas' a visit, and thought no more of the matter. Shortly after his return home, his servant came in during dinner to say that there was a gentleman in the hall with a large box, who could not speak English. He went

into the entrance hall, and was instantly clasped in the arms of his friend the Archbishop of Malabar, and fervently embraced. When he could extricate himself and look at his guest, his horror was extreme ; it was the same venerable face and figure, with a flowing beard, that he had seen in Egypt, but attired in the full and correct costume of an English midshipman ! The effect may be imagined. To Mr. Skinner's instant queries as to the reason for his choice of dress, the Archbishop told him that during his voyage to England he had been assured by some English middies on board that unless he provided himself with a suit of clothes in all points similar to their own, including the cap, he would be mobbed in London. However, he had brought his luggage with him, and he pointed to a huge packing-case, which, he said, contained his robes. Mr. Skinner immediately locked every door leading from the hall, and then and there insisted on his friend unpacking and putting on his proper attire, after which he introduced a splendid-looking Eastern Prelate to his family.

The unexpected guest stayed for just a year ; always communicating at the altar of St. Barnabas'. Mr. Skinner took him to Lambeth, having procured for him an interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury, who found himself at once enfolded in the close embrace of brotherly affection, struggling vainly against the repeated tokens of love bestowed upon him, and looking reproachfully at Mr. Skinner and his chaplain for having brought him into the predicament.

The following letters, practically giving freedom to the daughter church of St. Barnabas', set the senior curate forward on his course with the more ardour :—

8, Chesham Street, June 27, 1855.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

Now that you are returned to St. Barnabas', restored by God's blessing to health, I will lose no time in trying to make such arrangements about your position there, as may be mutually satisfactory to us, and beneficial to those committed to our care.

Both of us, and many of our best friends, are convinced that an institution like St. Barnabas' can never prosper to its full extent without a *resident head*, who shall have power to govern it and be responsible for it.

I, the incumbent, *cannot* do this, because my presence is no less constantly required at the parent church of St. Paul's.

I therefore wish to commit to you, as far as I lawfully may, the authority and responsibility of St. Barnabas'; deeply convinced, as I am, of your unswerving devotion to the cause of the Church of England generally, and to that of St. Barnabas' in particular.

I propose, first, to commit the charge of the other curates, the school teachers, chorister boys, and *all* persons connected with the work of St. Barnabas' to *you*; an appeal lying to me from them in any instance in which they may think they have cause of complaint against you.

Secondly, in all ecclesiastical matters, I would ask the Bishop of the diocese to agree to refer to you primarily for explanations, etc., etc., and to hold you, in your measure, responsible for the right ordering of what is committed to you, though his lordship would, of course, reserve to himself the power of making me, the incumbent, *ultimately* responsible.

I think it desirable that you should yourself seek an early interview with the Bishop; submit this letter to him, and obtain, as I should like, his lordship's approval of what is therein proposed.

Awaiting the result, I am, my dear Skinner,

Yours ever truly,

ROBERT LIDDELL.

Rev. James Skinner.

Fulham, July 11, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,

I see no objection to the arrangement proposed by Mr. Liddell in his letter to you of the 27th ult. But it must be understood that I must still look to *him* as being ultimately responsible for the management and conduct of Church matters at St. Barnabas'.

I am, my dear sir, your faithful servant,  
C. J. LONDON.

The Rev. James Skinner.

St. Barnabas' was not long left in peace. Apparently a document containing many articles of complaint was sent to the Bishop of London, who required an explanation from Mr. Skinner. It is given in the following letters :—

St. Barnabas' Parsonage, July 12, 1855.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to acknowledge your lordship's note of the 11th inst., enclosing a communication from Mr. Charles Smyth Vereker.

Your lordship will not expect any remarks from me upon that document, except so far as it refers to St. Barnabas' Church and College especially.

Art. 15.—The clergy of St. Barnabas' live in college, and in common *upon their own means*. The boys of the choir are poor orphans—scholars—clothed, educated, and maintained at the cost of private persons who contribute money for the purpose.

The establishment is neither large nor expensive ; and the residence of the senior curate, or head, in the college, with his wife and family, saves it from the imputation (whatever that is worth) of monasticism.

Mr. Vereker speaks of a vestry or sacristy, fitted up for auricular confession, with altar, cross, etc. I have to assure your lordship that this statement is incorrect.

The vestry referred to, from its convenient position, is well

suited for the evening family prayers of the whole establishment, and is used for that purpose. But there is no "altar" fitted up. A plain and simple cross stands on the window ledge.

This room is also used by the clergy to meet such persons as desire to see them privately—not being able to quiet their own consciences, but requiring further comfort and counsel. In this room they come to us, or some other, and open their grief; and as their needs require, they "receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice to the quieting of their consciences and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

Mr. Vereker also speaks of denial "to the poor of the consolation of the Lord's Supper, unless they previously submit themselves to the degradation of a full confession to the priest of their conduct during their past lives." I believe this statement to be simply false.

I have the honour to be, my lord,

Your lordship's dutiful and faithful servant,

J. A. SKINNER.

St. Barnabas' Parsonage, August 3, 1855.

MY LORD BISHOP,

I beg to return the copy of your lordship's letter to Mr. Vereker. There is only one observation which I desire permission from your lordship to make.

With respect to auricular confession, your lordship says, "Mr. Skinner denies that it is practised." Now, I fear this positive statement may render me liable, in Mr. Vereker's mind, to the imputation of want of straightforwardness.

I have not the least objection to acknowledge that what Mr. Vereker calls "auricular confession" is practised in the sacristy of St. Barnabas'.

Persons come there (it is the most convenient place) to "open their griefs and to receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice."

I think this is exactly what I stated to your lordship in my

letter of the 12th of July, and I make no doubt that this is exactly what Mr. Vereker means by "auricular confession."

Although, therefore, Mr. Vereker's statement, as a whole, about the sacristy was incorrect, I cannot say, understanding as I do his mind, that we do not hear "auricular confessions." I cannot say that persons do not come to us to confess, or that we do not hear such confessions with our ears.

With great respect,  
Your lordship's faithful son and servant,  
JA. SKINNER.

P.S.—I have omitted to observe, with reference to Mr. Vereker's notion of choristers tending to "suppress congregational psalmody," that in no church in your lordship's diocese is praise more congregational than in the chapel of St. Barnabas'.

The suit of "*Westerton v. Liddell*" was meanwhile proceeding, and the late Rev. Dr. Irons wrote on this subject to Mr. Skinner:

Brompton, July 28, 1855.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

The question to my mind is, whether Dr. Lushington will postpone his decision long enough to enable us to make any impression on *him*?

And next, whether we ought not to call a meeting of good Churchmen to form a league for mutual defence and common action in the event of an adverse decision?

Will you let me know what you think on these two points, and whether you contemplate anything definite?

For myself, regarding the Church of England as the hope and stronghold of Christianity in these latter days, I am prepared, by God's help, to adhere to *her* while vitality remains at all. The points now at stake, let us be thankful, are not vital ones. They are very sacred, but we must not misjudge their relative value in the great system of revelation.

You may command any service I can render in this matter.

The principal things that occur to me, on reading the case, have been the omitting to notice the word "retained" in the Rubric, and the re-introduction of the word "priest" in 1662 in *connection* with the removal of the Rubric, referring us to the first year of Edward VI.

When the case of Faulker and the round church at Cambridge was in court, Bayford was advocate for the malcontents. *His* brother-in-law told me, in private, that Bayford's feelings were more with Churchmen than with Puritans, and that, when arguing against altars (as an advocate), he came upon, and now has in his possession, a faculty issued by Queen Elizabeth for the erection of a stone altar; a fact which he would have been able to use triumphantly if he had been on the other side. I will try and see you on Monday; if not, on Tuesday.

Let us seek from God *His* guidance and support, and comfort ourselves with knowing we have only to do our own individual duty. The Church is God's Church. The cause is wholly God's. I am not in the least anxious. God knows what is best for us.

Your brother in Jesus Christ,

W. I. IRONS.

Rev. J. Skinner, St. Barnabas' College.

P.S.—Of course Liddell and the Oxford men are in communication.

Dr. Lushington's judgment, a signal triumph for Mr. Westerton over his vicar, was given in December of this year. A summary of the foundations which he laid down for his conclusions is thus given by Mr. Skinner. First—

(a) Avowing that he had "no authority to guide him," he nevertheless set aside the Ecclesiastical Common Law of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon times, and the Provincial and Diocesan Constitutions, all being still *alive* and *in force* where not contrary to statute.

(*b*) He assumed arbitrary rules of *policy* as a guide, converting words into a negative and exclusive sense which are affirmative and directory; laying down that what the Church has prescribed is a virtual prohibition of everything else, *ejusdem generis*, contrary to common sense and English jurisprudence; limiting the liberty which the law allows, and imposing the tyranny of a *minimum* when the Church gives the freedom of a *maximum*.

"The policy of one age," says Story in his "Conflict of Laws," "may ill suit the wishes of another; but the law is not to be subject to such fluctuations." Nevertheless, Dr. Lushington undertook, on principles of arbitrary selection, to enact laws for the Church of England.

Now, secondly, observe the conclusions to which he arrived.

(1) He outraged and insulted Christianity, by abrogating the use of the cross altogether as a symbol to adorn our churches.

(2) He pronounced the Church of England to be a newly constituted society, without identity or continuity or connection with the historical Church of Christ; his decision was equivalent to a *revolution*, to an entire reconstruction of the Church, on wholly new and unheard-of principles.

(3) The Sacrament, commonly called "the Mass" in the times preceding the *third* year of Edward VI., he declared to be "annihilated root and branch,—extirpated by authority of Parliament," and a new ordinance, with no relation to the former, substituted by the same authority, in its place.

(4) He insulted the character of one of the greatest men that England has known—the Christian philosopher and Bishop, Butler of Durham,—and, though occupying the seat of justice,

"Rebus et ordine dispar,"

pronounced him to be a "deviator into Roman Catholic practice," so "shadowing the purity of his faith, and the integrity of his character."

The gravity of such a crisis to the Church, as these sweeping conclusions of the Consistory Court of London brought upon her, can hardly be measured; and it will be impossible for the historian



of the future to evade the duty of minutely detailing the circumstances and arguments of attack and defence.

This is not the place or the time for a detailed history of the long litigation, as to the *ornamenta* (i.e. the furniture of English churches and the vestments of the English clergy), which has made "the Knightsbridge churches" famous; but it is the place and the time for saying, with all distinctness, that the inestimable gain which resulted from the issue of that litigation to the whole Church, is mainly due, under God, to the courage and perseverance and self-denying love of Robert Liddell, who bore contentedly the weary weight of the worse than *uncertainty* of judicial decisions on religious questions, from 1854 to 1857.

. . . Through his zeal, carrying the case, amid all the discouragements of defeat by the way, to the highest Court of Appeal, the Church has obtained that vantage ground of triumph which secures the *whole principle*, for the fruits of which she is fighting still, and from which she is resolved, God helping, never to be dislodged.

We are not now concerned with the question of the *fitness* of the Privy Council, in Judicial Committee, to sit upon spiritual and ecclesiastical questions; least of all are we concerned with the *consistency* of judgments, at various times pronounced by the same Court upon the same subjects. What we *are* concerned with is this:—that, rightly or wrongly, hearing the appeal from the two Courts below, the Privy Council reversed nearly every important *dictum* in which the former were agreed, and established, for ever, a historical *fact* which is not less a *principle* of religion. And what fact? That the "Ornaments Rubric" of 1661, which stands in the forefront of our Prayer-Book, covers the legality of the things so much disputed, and for ever connects the Church of England of to-day with the Church of England of ancient times.

It is nothing to us, though it is a discredit to them, that judges have since sat in that Court of Appeal who have seemed to confirm Dr. Lushington's view of policy and his wild and revolutionary opinions, rather than their own solemn decision. We only claim to be supported by the result for which we contended so long and

so laboriously in the Knightsbridge suits, and we mean never to let that support go. Not the use of the cross only, but of all the *ornamenta* which our public worship requires, is secured to us by statutable authority, according to the judgment of the Court of Appeal.

Let me quote the exact words—"Here it is to be noted that the minister, at the time of the Communion, and at all other times of his ministration, shall use such ornaments in the church as were in use by authority of Parliament in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI., according to the Act of Parliament set in the beginning of this book." "Here the term 'ornaments' is used as covering *both the vestments of the ministers* and the several articles used in the services; it is confined to such things as, in the performance of the services, the minister was to use." "The Rubric to the Prayer-Book of January 1, 1604, adopts the language of the Rubric of Elizabeth. The Rubric to the present Prayer-Book adopts the language of the Statute of Elizabeth; but they all, obviously, mean the same thing—that the same dresses, and the same utensils, or articles, which were used under the first Prayer-Book of Edward VI. may still be used."

I beg you to notice how plain and clear and unambiguous was their way to this decision; they speak of it as obvious; they were not driven to read a *not* into the text, or to interpolate the "Advertisements" of Elizabeth in order to extract some more popular explanation; but, they said, with the simplicity of fair-dealing men, "when reference is made to the first Prayer-Book of Edward VI., with this explanation of the term 'ornaments,' *no difficulty* will be found in discovering among the articles, of which the use is there enjoined, 'ornaments' of the church as well as 'ornaments' of the minister. Besides the vestments, differing in the different services, the Rubric provides for the use of an English Bible, the new Prayer-Book, a poor man's box, a chalice, a corporas, a paten, a bell, and some other things." That these articles were included in the term "ornaments" of the church, at the period in question, is clear.

No subsequent manipulation of the Ornaments Rubric by the

Privy Council can deprive us of the first, the natural, the common-sense construction which such men as Lords Cranworth, Wensleydale, and Kingsdown, Sir John Patteson, and Sir Wm. Maule put upon it. But for this we are largely indebted, under God, to Robert Liddell; and the *present* sanctuary and reredos erected in St. Paul's in 1870 is the fittest, as it is the most telling, witness to the debt; for every detail of that structure was passed through the Consistorial Court, and declared to be according to law.

The anxiety and disappointment of the suit, however, without the final victory, all came during Mr. Skinner's charge of St. Barnabas'. He worked through the winter of 1855, but in the hot summer of 1856 began again to suffer from serious attacks of illness, entirely disabling him from time to time. He struggled on, against his doctor's repeated assurance that, unless he at once *entirely* gave up all work for two years, he would soon have to give it up altogether.

In August he ruptured a small blood-vessel from violent coughing, and it was then that he had to look the fact seriously in the face that he *must* resign the curacy of St. Barnabas' and leave London. The two following letters were written about this time:

Middleton Rectory, August 13, 1856.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

Thanks for all your kind and affectionate words. I do feel quite resigned to God's will, whatever that may be. I hope it is not my own will that, being thwarted, perplexes me. I try myself honestly; and I *think* the one difficulty which presses, in connection with my sickness, is, how far I may go in hindering the work of St. Barnabas', by keeping out an abler man. Do not flatter me by telling me that I am *the* man, etc.; for that is very humbling, knowing myself as I do. God *makes* men for His

own purposes : He puts down one and raises up another. And if He intimates as much, I *must* take it to myself that He has no longer use for me in my present sphere. So, really, ought I not to resign at once, and allow another to come and take my office? That is the *one* question which perplexes, now again, as once it did before. I do not think that there *would* be means forthcoming for an extra man ; and if there were, I must still work and move as the life of the whole : and am I fit for it ?

The cough continues very, very unyielding : no more blood, but pain and sleeplessness and feebleness unutterable. But I do not wish to seem to complain. God is Love ; and so I feel and know Him to be.

Reading, Berks, SS. Simon and Jude, 1856.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We are now drawing near homeward, and we are both glad of it. To-morrow, please God, we shall be at St. Barnabas' once more. Yet now I must feel, what I have always so dreaded, that I am coming to call St. Barnabas' *home* for a little, and then, no more.

The trial *to myself* is very heavy : I cannot bear the thought of it. To others, I feel sure there will be no loss which will not be tenfold made up by the appointment of a stronger and an abler man. But it is sad to feel one's self *cast off*, at such a crisis for the Church as this ; and I need your prayers for faith, and patience' and endurance, and all graces of hope and love.

I am really stronger in body, though my cough continues, and my voice is often gone.

Still he struggled against the conviction, hoping, with the sanguine hope which was part of his nature, that temporary absences would give him power enough to hold on to his passionately loved church and district. As before, his kindest friend had to come to the rescue.

I consider it cruel towards you and your dear wife (Mr. Liddell wrote on November 5, 1856) to allow you to remain at St. Barnabas'

in your present state. Not only are you unable to do any duty, but it will be in my opinion as much as your life is worth to reside at St. Barnabas' during the approaching winter months. . . .

My own private conviction, in which all friends whom I have consulted concur, is that the only reasonable hope of your restoration to health, and of the prolongation of your valuable life, is to go abroad to the same climate which did you so much good before. But I wish to fortify my own opinion by that of a medical man.

Two days later, after quoting the medical opinion, he continues :

Now, my dearest friend, with deep grief, but without any doubt as to what my duty is, I feel imperatively bound to call upon you to resign the cure of St. Barnabas'.

You yourself know how I had anticipated availing myself of your services there.

But disabled as you are, by the sovereign will of God, I must bow my head and seek for another coadjutor.

I feel that it is of infinite moment to you that you should get away to a warmer climate immediately, while the weather is yet such as not to prevent your moving.

Whatever your own self-devotion may be, I have to remember your poor wife and child, to whom you must be everything ; and I cannot suffer you, so far as my influence goes, to remain in a locality which I verily believe would be your actual death before the winter was over. . . .

I have no misgivings about St. Barnabas' eventually coming right, if we do our own duty. It may comfort you under the painful prospect of your severance from St. Barnabas', to mention, in close confidence, that so soon as I shall have received from you the formal intimation that you resign your curacy *in compliance with my request* (for I will take the whole responsibility of the act upon myself), I purpose to offer the post, so onerous yet so honourable, to Mr. Gresley. But I have as yet had *no* communication, direct or indirect, with him upon the subject.

I am simply inclined to believe that he *might* take it, and I consider that it would be impossible to find a more eligible man.

Believe me, my dear Skinner, with true affection,

Your faithful friend and brother in Christ,

ROBERT LIDDELL.

Mr. Skinner apparently sent in his resignation the same day, for the following touching note bears the same date as the preceding letter :—

36, Wilton Crescent, November 7, 1856.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

I cannot comment on your letter ; it is too touching, and makes my very heart ache.

No, dearest friend, I will *not* hurry you so far as your domestic arrangements are concerned ; *only* would I hurry you *personally*, and that from love, that you may not throw away a chance of improvement by delay.

If want of money stops you I will try and advance you what is necessary, and trust to the sympathy of friends for helping.

My single view is to get *you* into a warmer climate before it is too advanced in the winter for you to be able to move.

But in this, take the advice of your medical men. I am, however, much mistaken if they will not press the same point. . . .

I have no time for more. God ever bless and support you. I wish for efficiency's sake it were me to go and you to stay.

Always, my dear Skinner,

Your faithful and affectionate friend and brother in Christ,  
R. L.

On Christmas Day, 1856, Mr. Skinner preached his farewell sermon to an overflowing congregation, and on the last day of the year left his home at St. Barnabas' in obedience to the call which bade him part from the work dearest to him on earth.

His congregation connected his name with St. Barnabas'

for ever by placing a certain sum in consols, "to be paid in half-yearly dividends to such poor person or persons, being communicants at St. Barnabas', as he should during his life from time to time nominate in writing to receive the same, such nomination to be yearly made on the Feast of St. Barnabas';" and a brass tablet recording the benefaction was placed on the tower pier in the church.\*

Mr. Skinner was unable to leave England until March 2, 1857.

On that morning (his wife wrote) there was a special celebration of the Holy Communion at St. Barnabas', at which one hundred and ninety-two communicated with us. A number of our dear friends accompanied us to the Waterloo Station, and saw us off to Southampton; and thus we took leave of our beloved St. Barnabas'.

The travellers reached Mentone on March 11. A few extracts from letters home describe their way of life.

Hôtel des Quatres Nations, Mentone, March 13, 1857.

... We have been house-hunting ever since we arrived (Wednesday, 11th), and hope we may have found at last a pretty little villa likely to suit us—*Villa Ste. Anne*. It is in a lovely quiet situation, standing alone with a garden in front and facing the sea, on the east side of the town, and about ten minutes' walk from it. It is backed with a grove of orange and lemon and olive trees. Our landlord, M. Massa, is a gentlemanly, agreeable person, and a first-rate violinist, and has been frequently to the hotel to play with me. It is most delightful to both James and myself, and brings back to my mind happy hours at Middleton with my dear father.

... There are only two English families here besides ourselves, and they have been here all the winter. The Rev. John Monsell,† with his wife and three charming daughters; the

\* It was removed by his successor, and placed behind the font.

† Afterwards Dr. Monsell, Vicar first of Egham and then of Guildford.

youngest much out of health ; it is for her sake they are here. The other family are the Rev. Thomas Arthur Babington,\* with his wife and two little girls, about the same ages as our children. Mr. Babington is much out of health, and has to give up duty for the present. They are most kind, agreeable people.

At present there are no other English families here, and I was told the other day that this is the first winter that any English have visited Mentone. Nice is the favourite place, but we cannot understand its being preferred to Mentone.

Villa Ste. Anne, May 18, 1857.

. . . We like our pretty villa very much, and we fit into it beautifully. We are able to reserve one room for an oratory, and James has fitted it up beautifully. We have full service every Sunday, with Holy Communion. Our dear friends the Monsells and Babingtons, I regret to say, have left ; but I think the Babingtons will return in the autumn.

Villa Ste. Anne, Mentone, December 30, 1857.

. . . There are a number of English families here, besides ourselves and the Babingtons, this winter, and many are most thankful to avail themselves of the services in this house on Sundays and holy days. On Christmas Day we had twenty communicants. There is a door between the little room which we have fitted up as an oratory and the drawing-room. So we open this door now, and most of the *congregation* are in this larger room. We have full choral service ; I play the piano, and the children and others sing capitally.

Mr. Babington and James take the services between them, which seem to be much valued by the English visitors. Dear James usually gives an address, and this quite takes me back to St. Barnabas'. . . Crowds of the inhabitants assemble at our gate during the service—the music attracting them. I think they are much puzzled at our proceedings.

Mr. Skinner did not cease to try and help by corre-

\* Afterwards Rector of Wanlip, Leicester.



spondence those whom he had formerly taught. He writes to one of these, giving some suggestions as to special Lenten devotion :

I advise you to take half an hour or twenty minutes of every day this Lent . . . take a certain period of your life every day, comparing it, *as it was*, with what it is in God's sight, the light of His love having come upon you to illuminate your view of it. At another part of the day, take, each day, one of these four necessary virtues, and resolve to exercise them :—

1. Humility—by keeping yourself always back, as nothing ; looking upon God as all ; humbling yourself to *your neighbour*, in something or other, daily. In order to this, think upon what you have *deserved* by your ingratitude to God and your sins, and therefore that the least service you receive from others is more than, often, you have paid to God, and more than you have really deserved.

2. Penitence—frequently recall your chief sins, and place yourself before God as a penitent, in the spirit of the Magdalene, or St. Peter, or the publican. Offer to God, in a penitential spirit, whatever pains, or trials, or sufferings you have, and even death itself.

3. Resignation—resigning yourself to God's will in all events, remembering that nothing happens without His permission and pleasure ; and that this or that cross is what God, from eternity, has designed for you, *to be your probation*.

4. Recollection—calling to mind, as often as you can in the day, the presence of God. Making frequent ejaculations and aspirations, and acts of love to Him ; offering Him frequently in the day your whole being ; and banishing, as much as you can, all vain amusements, and *anxious cares*, and irregular affections, that you may the more easily repose in Him.

You should say the seven penitential psalms, one every morning, and the fifteen gradual psalms, one every evening, during Lent ; in thought of the humility of Jesus, and of your desire to be *humbled* and to be humble.

As to fasting, you must not attempt it, except under medical advice; but deny yourself in inner things, such as pleasures in social sympathy, reading, etc.

To another, who had asked for a Lenten rule, he gave the following; it is written in pencil, and evidently during a time of weakness:—

I. Make this Lent the occasion for practising the *ordinary discipline* of a regulated Christian life, according to the sketch which you have already received.

II. Distrust yourself, but trust the Holy Spirit.

Begin everything by saying inwardly, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, **THEY** are the Sons of God."

And in order to rooting this dependence on the Spirit into your life, meditate quietly once a week (say, on Sunday evenings) on Rom. viii., concluding with the "Veni Creator."

III. Aim continually and continuously in all things, great and small, inward and outward, to *honour and glorify God*, as the motive and purpose. The regeneration and perfection of a soul is nothing for its own sake. But for the glory of God it cost the Incarnation and Crucifixion (in that Incarnation) of the Eternal Son. You only live, therefore, at all, that you may glorify God; and you never so glorify Him, as when you are conformed to the life of God in our flesh, and when you offer that life and that death as the sacrifice which your sin caused and His love accepted.

For special Lenten discipline, take—

1. One penitential psalm (out of the seven) to be said before each of your regular acts of devotion, both in closet and at church.

2. One book for spiritual reading, an hour in the morning.

3. One book for spiritual reading, an hour in the evening.

To refuse all other reading on Wednesdays and Fridays.

4. Exempt from fasting from flesh meat except on . . . .

5. Instead of such fast, to give the cost of a portion of meat to some poor or sick; and to say a special intercession for the self-indulgent and luxurious in all different ranks of life.

- (a) The Court.
- (b) The aristocracy.
- (c) The clergy and gentry.
- (d) The mercantile and trading.
- (e) The army and navy ; and also for the profligate and abandoned in vice, both rich and poor. To say this specially in a church (if there is opportunity) on all days on which you eat flesh meat by exemption.

6. Every day in Lent, on which you communicate, say the prayer of St. Gregory on the Passion *before* receiving, with a short act of contrition, either overnight or in the morning.

7. On days on which you do not receive, say the Stations of the Cross and the Litany of the Passion.

The following letter appears to have been written with the feeling, from his own experience, of the evils of over-occupation :—

I am clear in my judgment that you are sinning against one of the highest duties to God, your neighbour, and yourself, in imposing upon yourself an amount of work which would be beyond your strength if you were a paid Secretary of State. I well know your zeal . . . but really *good* work is never done, when it is out of proportion to our means of doing it well ; and no work is really *well* done when it is only effected by the sacrifice of powers which are all wanted for other ends, none of which can afford to be missed, even in part, much less altogether.

I cannot understand why you should not compel yourself to see that. Even when things most crowd in upon you, the work of disposing of them is *better* done quietly and deliberately, one after another, as strength will bear, than tumultuously, under the misery of strain, pressure, and exhaustion ; and, spiritually, you should try always to remember that everything (no matter what it may be) which comes to your hand to do can only be good when it is done for God, and that nothing is well done for God which is done without due regard to His peace-bringing and restful Presence.

In Advent he sent to one whom he had taught—

*Thoughts of Prayer on the Incarnation.*

An Exercise before Christmas.

I. That the *will* of God elected, from all eternity, to empty Himself of His glory and to take flesh, in order that I might be restored to the glory which I had lost.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Our Father.

Collect for Annunciation and for Christmas.

II. That the will of God to accept the humiliation of the Incarnation was to Him a joy, and that He rejoiced as a giant "to run his course," thereby identifying all profitable and real joy with self-sacrifice.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Our Father.

Collect for Annunciation and Christmas.

III. That the will of God to be humbled and to identify humiliation with joy, finds its expression in the life of Jesus Christ, from the womb to the cross, offering to me, in detail, the things I have to do and fear, in order to be "made like" unto Him.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Our Father.

Collect for Annunciation and Christmas.

He writes later to the same pupil :

Try to cultivate that perfect contentment and sufficiency in Jesus, which the Blessed Virgin had in her Son, so that she felt nothing as a sorrow or trouble in her tried life, till she was separated from Him. Surely with Him, and in Him, we have all else. To be unhappy about anything, therefore, except losing Him is a sign that we are not cultivating, absolutely, our privilege of possessing Him. An ancient spiritual guide who is a great help to me says that in seeking a perfect knowledge of one's self, there are specially the emotions to be watched of the four passions—(1) Joy, (2) Sorrow, (3) Hope, and (4) Fear, as being the

roots or sources of all emotions whatever. One should restrain them in their first rising, not only when they are engaged on wrong objects, but on objects which do not really concern or belong to one: because one is perpetually excited to joy, to sorrow, to hope, to fear, about mere trifles or imaginary things; and so the soul's strength gets weakened through occupying the mind and the will with objects *beside* the Divine end. When the things are really necessary, and do concern our real self, then we may safely leave them with God, commend them to Him, and so, as it were, "divinize" them. Thus, if you have a joy naturally and necessarily growing out of some blessing, in grace or in nature, something beautiful and good, let your joy not be in it, but in God, whose work it is. "I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of Thy hands." So if you have hope in a matter of health, or success in an undertaking, or an honour expected, take care that it is in Him, and because of His will being done and His glory increased. And so also, if you have a grief, or sorrow, or cause of depression and anxiety, do not let your fear have any respect to the evil in itself (except as it is some plain fault in yourself); let it expend itself on what the loss of God would be.

Another method is to think, when a great joy comes, of how much more after one's deserts it would be to have a heavy sorrow; and so to learn the more to attribute it alone to God. And then when depressed with one's little success in spiritual gifts and profitableness generally, there comes a conviction that, after all, one has only been dealt with as one deserves; and this conviction is, by the law of God's providence, a substantial gain in the spiritual life. So also if one is agitated by fears and misgivings, the way is to turn them into acts of the will, in the exact opposite direction. This was St. Francis's rule—"Accipe dulcia pro amaris, amara pro dulcibus." I think my child may *try* to imitate it, in her measure, with good results.

Is it not so, that the *enfeebling* of the soul's strength, which seems occasionally to manifest itself in you, comes of too little *trust* in God, and too great introspection of and dwelling upon self, or on human aids? The first remedy for it is to believe that

God's care for you is *singular*, just as if you only lived. There is nothing ordered for you that is not ordered by Him, for His own greater glory and your greater profit (1 St. Peter v. 7). In every trouble appeal to Him ; lay it before Him, and then leave it, in perfect confidence as to the result.

The next remedy is to extinguish, to the uttermost of your power, all anxiety to stand well in human eyes, and to banish every rising of vanity, and vainglory, and love of applause. One's care and anxiety should rather be, lest one should *not* incur the reproof and rebuke of the world, and even of respectable and good men ; at least, if equal glory should be rendered to God by so doing, and one's own will and opinion is not the end served. It seems to those whose experience in spiritual life is long and abundant, that in things lawful one should aim at that which would be less acceptable to men, if one would gain complete mastery over that timidity and pusillanimity which are such hindrances in serving God.

May God the Holy Ghost bless these hints to you.

## CHAPTER X.

### LIFE AT HILLINGDON.

1858-1861.

"Our wills are ours, we know not how ;  
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

IN the early summer of 1858 Mr. Skinner returned with his family to England, having spent a year in his home on the Riviera. He had made an excursion to Lyons during the previous summer, to try, by the advice of his London doctor, a course of electricity under a famous practitioner, and for a short time it had done him much good. But, although travelling by easy stages from Mentone to London, he was so unwell that at one time it was feared that he could not continue the journey, and when at last he reached England, his friends were shocked at his appearance, for he looked almost like a dying man. After a time he went to Scotland, near Inverary ; and he said long afterwards, "As soon as my foot was upon my native heath, I began to revive." The bracing climate did him far more good than the south of France, but he was still too much of an invalid to attempt any work for others except by letter, and he spent the winter of 1858-9 at Clifton.

To a friend who had written to him on the subject of

difficulties in prayer, and also on the difference between the Scottish and English Liturgy, he writes :

. . . A few words, on each of your difficulties, may suffice for the present.

I. The Scottish Liturgy is founded upon the ancient Liturgical models of the *East*, all of which bring in the invocation for the change in the elements, by the action of the Holy Ghost, *after* the words of the institution.

II. The English office is founded upon the *Roman* use, which brings in the invocation *before* the words. Indeed, the English (modern) office has omitted (alas!) the specific words of invocation altogether! But it *implies* the invocation, which is sufficient for the validity of the consecration. "Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee; and grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, . . . *may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood.*"

This is a plain and direct prayer to God (who operates always by the Third Person in the glorious Trinity) to make the Communion of bread and wine—to those who receive them—the Body and Blood of Christ.

Therefore, to all intents and purposes, so far as the invocation is necessary to the validity of consecration, the English office *has that invocation*. The only question is—(1) ought it to be offered before the words of institution or after them? and (2) can it affect the consecration itself, its being either the one or the other?

The answer is—

1. The Eastern Church has from the beginning observed the use of the invocation *after* the words; while the Western Church (except the ancient Spanish, and perhaps the Gallican, both of Eastern origin) has observed it *before* the words. It may, consequently, be either way (though the Eastern is the more ancient). Because—

2. The consecration depends *really* upon our Blessed Lord's own words, which *being His words, are the words of the Holy Ghost*



*also*, and carry *with them* what they import, and so long as the invocation is allied and attached to the words, it can in no degree be important whether it precedes or follows them in its effect—which is to witness that He who transforms the creatures into the Body and Blood of Christ is the Holy Ghost.

III. As to books of devotion, if they distract you, set them aside, at least for a time. But you must be very careful not to let your mind roam at random, even in prayer, without a book ; if so, you will probably land in greater distraction than before. I would advise you to arrange, first, in your mind, the order of your prayer, under each head of devotion ; and then to let it go free, to use its own devotional instincts in the expression of each. For instance—

1. Adoration.
2. Thanksgiving.
3. Confession of sin.
4. Oblation of self.
5. Petition for grace.
6. Intercession for others.

You will find this plan expanded in my “Twenty-one Heads.” . . .

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1. As to the power of “realizing” God’s presence in His house or anywhere : you must first consider that it never *can* be realized ; that no flesh *can* adequately or truly see God. It is possible, therefore, that straining after something which *cannot* be “realized” you fail, and so grow disheartened and discouraged without good reason. The *consciousness* of God’s presence with us always is a moral and spiritual gift, which deals entirely with the conscience, and keeps it restrained and controlled, and, so to say, under continual fear of offending. The exercise of this becomes habitual to those who desire to have it, and who make a point of continually asking the Holy Spirit to give it to them and to keep them in it. If you will make a point every day, and *frequently* during the day, of asking God the Holy Spirit to keep you under the sense of the Divine presence, to rule all you say

and think and do, and will put the card which I send you in the form of a prayer (which you may learn by heart, and say often during the day), you will be much helped.

2. As to distractions in prayer—take this advice. Some are voluntary, others are involuntary. Of the former, if you are guilty of them, consider how dishonouring and insulting to God it must be to behave to Him worse than your politeness would make you behave to a friend ; to come to speak to Him, and to hear Him speak, and then wilfully and on purpose to turn your mind and thoughts away from Him elsewhere. To do this wilfully is, of course, wilfully to rob yourself of grace—of the very thing which you pretend to seek for ; and it is worse than this—it is wilfully to provoke God to anger by the very means by which you pretend to conciliate Him. The very thought of such an awfully wicked thing would keep every one from voluntary distractions in prayer. Yet some are guilty of these, and the only remedy is to seek out the cause and remove it. The cause is some unguarded and unmortified affection for earthly objects which are *deliberately encouraged* to come in between the soul and God. You may easily multiply the wilful distractions in prayer by the wilful acts of unmortification of the senses. They who yield up everything they ask for to the outward senses *must*, of course, be filled with distractions, for which they have none but themselves to blame. Get into the habit of controlling and mortifying the tongue, ear, eye, etc., and *voluntary* distractions will soon cease. Or again, those who do not *prepare* themselves for prayer, who neglect to be in church before service for the purpose of prayer, that they may pray, or else do not well consider, before they begin their private prayer, *what it is for* they are going to thank God or to ask Him, are sure to be distracted ; but that again is their own fault. For nothing could be simpler and easier than to consider beforehand the order and the matter of the prayer which they are going to offer.

As to involuntary distractions—do not be so much distressed about them, as anxious to accept them as a just punishment from God for past sins, in the spirit of humility and repentance :

submit to them and bear them, condemning yourself, and asking God for grace not to yield yourself to them. There are two things to consider in them. There is the distraction in itself, and there is the painful *sense* which it brings with it. The distraction in itself you cannot but hate, you cannot but *not* consent to it, but the pain which it brings to you is good for you—it is a sign that you do not love to be distracted, and that you love prayer ; for those who do not love prayer love to be distracted. In this way, distraction is like any other temptation to which you do not yield—an evil in itself, but an instrument for humbling you and making you vile in your own eyes, which is the way of becoming great in the eyes of God. Besides, distractions of this kind are often the punishment for having long neglected prayer, or used it amiss in days gone by ; yes, and for having too long put off the effort to do better. It is but just that God should, for a time, refuse to us those graces which He would have given to us had we persevered in prayer without falling away, but which we did not care to have when we might. Prayer is familiarity with God, but you do not become familiar with one whom you have seldom spoken to or cared to see, all at once, do you ?

But take your distractions, so long as they are not wilful, as your just punishment. Bear this humbly as your desert. Persevere continually and earnestly against them ; praying on in spite of them. God may take them away from you and set you free, or He may not. Never mind. Go on trusting Him for years ; yea, even unto death.

3. As to controversy—my earnest advice to you is always to decline it as a rule. For the most part, you will do no good with it to others, and you will greatly wrong yourself. Set a good consistent example of holy living, according to the rules of the Church, being always bright and cheerful among those with whom you live ; say frankly that you prefer not to discuss religious controversy—and you will do far more good to others and to yourself than by any other way. The way of love and gentleness is the conqueror's way always. Christianity is something for us to *live out*, not to *talk about*.

In Lent he wrote to another :

Draw up categorically the revealed tokens of love in the Epistle for Quinquagesima, and every day take one point, and examine yourself by it, beginning again when you have gone through the fifteen. On Wednesdays and Fridays take them all, and go through them. There is nothing so humbling as that Epistle, in which the Holy Ghost has revealed that we may possess every possible gift, and yet be *nothing*.

As to spiritual exhaustion, the feeling as though all were of no use—it is in the experience of all, you are not singular ; and there is this to learn from it, that God is humbling you, and so bringing you nearer to Himself ; that it is more profitable than consolation, because through desolation we are more humbled, and humiliation is the only way to solid exaltation, even though it may go on to the end, till we reach the other shore.

What God sees in you is the want of self-subjugation. He out of love brings you to this. Take it as a sign of love, thank Him for it. Say to yourself, "Who am I? I am not an angel. I am not as Adam was created. Yet if an angel fell, if sinless human nature fell, who am I, to think I should not fall?" This brings me to what is far more dangerous than spiritual desolation—the habit of forgetting what has been enjoined on you as helps to spiritual progress. You remember what Dr. Pusey says—"that men more often forsake God through forgetting Him than through denying Him." It is like the danger of losing a treasure through putting it into a vessel with holes. It is like putting sand of gold into a sieve. We ought to be adding to our store, not losing. When we forget, we are not "holding fast that we have." We cannot afford to lose grace ; watch against that, against not living in the presence of God.

Aim at nothing short of perfection. And yet you should think why you so continually fail not only as to your own standard, but even as to a lower standard, coming short of even respectable spiritual progress. It is that self-adoration. But do not be disheartened ; it is a universal epidemic, which can only be

counteracted by supernatural aid. What you have to think of is, what efforts are you making to overcome it? Are you in earnest? Are you humbled?

The summer of 1859 was spent amongst friends in England and Scotland, and in October Mr. Skinner settled himself with his family at Hillingdon Cottage, near Uxbridge, with the thought that it might be his permanent home for years. He was anxious to be near London, as he was much occupied at this time with setting on foot and organizing the English Church Union, in concert with the Hon. Colin Lindsay, whom he had frequently met during the summer of 1859.

Archdeacon Denison has told us lately that "there is the English Church Union itself gathering into one aspirations and local efforts in the cause of the Church of Christ. I was in 1860 chairman of the meetings at Mr. Trower's rooms, in Victoria Street, which issued in the formation and development of the English Church Union. I have lived to see nearly every one with whom from the outset it had been my happiness to labour in the first and best of all common and public causes—to see these pass away."

For the first two or three years (Mr. Lindsay writes) Mr. Skinner and I met very frequently, and many consultations we had together on various subjects.

The English Church Union was no doubt the issue of his brain—as you will see from the enclosed, it was originally the old Church of England Protection Society that he founded. Although I was the first president, he was, till he resigned, the real leader of the society. I became his successor, as it were, his mantle falling on my shoulders, though I had not a spirit equal to his. He was one of the most remarkable men I ever knew, and had he been blessed with strong health would have left the impress

of his mind upon the whole body of the Church of England. One begins and another takes up the work, the architect being often removed and the work left behind.

12, Prince of Wales Terrace, Kensington, December 1, 1882.

MY DEAR MRS. SKINNER,

You asked me to "give you any information in my power as to the work Mr. Skinner and I did together many years ago;" and you ask me whether he had not, with me, a great deal to do with the founding of the English Church Union, and also with the first bringing out of the *Church Review*?

It is more than twenty years ago since I first met Mr. Skinner, and my meeting with him was brought about in the following manner:—

In 1849 a number of Church Unions were formed in various parts of the country, which in the course of a few years became a number of disorganized bodies. A few years after (I forget the exact year), Mr. Skinner and I, then strangers, conceived the idea of so reorganizing these Unions that, out of the chaos, union and united action might be the result. Mr. Skinner, with Mr. Perry\* and others, founded the Church Protection Society, and I, who was then President of the Manchester Church Society, with the committee of the association, called a meeting of all existing Church Unions and the Church of England Protection Society, which took place in London. This meeting resulted in the selection of the last-named society as the nucleus from which the whole Church Union system was to arise.

The Church of England Protection Society, under the management of Mr. Skinner, amended its rules, adapting them to altered circumstances, and changing its name to that of the English Church Union. I subsequently became president, and my old friend Mr. Skinner honorary secretary. For a few years we worked together, and many plans were formed and carried into effect by us both, with the consent of the council.

Among these was the establishment of a paper which took the

\* Rev. T. W. Perry, now Vicar of Ardleigh, Essex.

name of the *Church Review*. I do not remember whether he or I first proposed its institution; we talked over the matter many times between ourselves, and the result was the *Church Review*, which was intended to be the organ of the Union, and the medium of communication with members. Mr. Skinner was its first editor, and he worked at it with a will and earnestness which ultimately obliged him to give it up for want of physical power. The articles in the first and, I think, the second volume were chiefly his, and very able they were.

But we did more together than establish this paper. We laid down the plans for developing the Union, by the formation of local branches and other forms of organization, the results of which we now see in the present body.

I think I have said everything connected with Mr. Skinner's work in the foundation and development of the English Church Union, in which he had the largest share, as also in the case of the *Church Review*, and I think that the present members of the Union owe him a great debt of gratitude for the wisdom, energy, and marked ability he displayed at the beginning of the career of both.

The English Church Union is now a powerful body for good or for evil (the former I hope, though I am no longer a member of the Church of England); but the *Church Review* is, unless greatly improved, a poor affair.

A few years after the formation of the Union, Mr. Skinner resigned his post of honorary secretary, and I assure you I missed him greatly for many a month; for I had to carry on the work without his valuable assistance, without his knowledge to instruct me, and without his long experience to guide me. His resignation was a great loss to us all.

It was a great, though sad, pleasure to meet him last year at Bath, after so many years' separation. My meeting him again revived all my earlier affection for him, and I mourned for him when it pleased God to take him. Daily do I pray for his soul, for I believe He always acted in perfect good faith towards God and His Church.

I am yours truly,  
COLIN LINDSAY.

Meantime, in his quiet country home, and without the anxieties of a cure of souls, Mr. Skinner was gradually regaining some measure of health. In the summer of 1860 he went abroad with a friend, visiting Switzerland, the north of Italy, Vienna, and other places. It was during the Protestant *furor* at St. George's-in-the-East, and his account of a Protestant service at Breslau is evidently written with a view to English bigotry.

Bellagio, Lago di Como, August 13, 1860.

I spent some days at Zurich, and I find that once greatly privileged place in Puritan estimation wholly given to indifference or unbelief. There is but one pastor in the place who preaches "evangelically," and he is so dull that few go to hear him.

The Protestants of Zurich have no religious creed by which to live, and so they live by the light of conscience. There is a good moral life among many, and a bad moral life among many. But, speaking generally, there is a *religious* life among none. On one day in the week, Sunday, they worship God by *preaching* in the churches, early in the morning, to which few go. The rest of the day is given to pleasure. And the pleasures of Zurich are just such as would naturally follow a sapless service of preaching, and contrast with the pleasures which follow a living service of Eucharistic sacrifice.

I do not approve of all the pleasures in which I see those indulge who have attended early Mass in other places, any more than I approve of the pleasures of the people at Zurich. But I say that in the two kinds of pleasure there is a contrast; and the pleasures at Zurich, which are of the lowest kind—beer-drinking and shooting—are in the teeth of the religion which the people profess. Catholics may exceed in their Sunday pleasures. But they do not please themselves at the cost of their religious profession. The Protestants of Zurich both exceed in their Sunday pleasures and set their religious profession at defiance. I believe



that the profession of Protestantism at Zurich is the profession of no religion at all.

Again, there is a state of confusion among Protestants abroad for which I was not prepared. There are some three or four hundred Swiss and German Protestants at Milan, Lutherans and Calvinists. Nothing can be more distinct than the creeds of Lutherans and Calvinists, and nothing more important than the distinction. The whole doctrine of the Incarnation and its effects is implied in it. Yet at Milan the Lutherans and Calvinists have but one "minister" between them, and one church. First, their Holy Communion is celebrated for Lutherans by this pastor, who is himself a Calvinist, and received by the people outside the rails, kneeling, with the wafer placed in the mouth, and the cup not passed into the hands. And then it is celebrated, *by the same man*, for Calvinists, and the people enter within the rails, approach the table, stand, and (as I am told) help themselves. And all this is done, with no sense whatever of its inconsistency, not to say profanity, for the sake, first of economy, and secondly of preserving a notion of unity among themselves in the face of the Latin Communion.

Such is Protestantism. And in the Roman Church the state of things is little better. Since the political *bouleversement* of last year and this, contempt for the Church among the higher classes is openly avowed. The whole body of the priesthood is spoken of with disrespect, and the ordinances which they minister with profane disregard. Women are the chief worshippers, and for them, and for children, and for the poor it is plainly said the system may do. The educated men despise it. A Milanese gentleman, whom I met recently, treated excommunication as an excellent joke; and, including himself in the sentence which is supposed to affect the King of Sardinia, asked derisively, "What can it work on me? I am the same man the day after it that I was the day before it!" The corruption of the Church, through Roman error and extravagance, is now bringing forth its proper fruits. And God only knows at what a terrible cost to how many thousand souls!

Meantime, of all the blessings which we English Catholics enjoy, the greatest by far is that safeguard against Protestantism on one side, and Romanism on the other—the Book of Common Prayer.

May God preserve it whole and entire to us, and us faithful and unflinching to it, should be our daily prayer.

To his child he wrote :

Munich, September 6, 1860.

MY DARLING,

. . . Innsbruck is a lovely place. I was there last Sunday. And Sunday was the "Feast of the Guardian Angel." The simple people of the beautiful mountains and valleys and river-sides love to think of the angels that keep watch over their beloved land, and over themselves and their families ; and they keep one day in the year as a great and holy festival, and they devote themselves, all that day, to blessing God for their guardian angel. I was very fortunate in finding all this out, and making my way across the river Inn to the suburbs of the town, where, in procession, the peasants, in beautiful costumes, were carrying banners to the sound of music, before and behind a large image of the "Guardian Angel," and saying prayers and singing hymns. First came the men with their rifles, with which they are always ready to defend their valleys ; then, the priests in their vestments ; and then, women and little girls dressed in white, with beautiful garlands of flowers. It was a lovely sight, and the simple piety of the peasant people moved my heart and made me glad.

May God bless my darling little girl, and make her guardian angel to keep watch over her ! And may she never frighten her angel away, by naughty words or thoughts or deeds !

To a friend he wrote from Dresden :

Perhaps the most remarkable churches at Breslau are the two Protestant parish churches of the city—the St. Mary Magdalene and the St. Elizabeth churches. They are remarkable, not simply as treasuries of art—which they are emphatically—but as tokens

of the spirit of Protestantism at Breslau. Nothing has been defaced or destroyed in these churches. Even the huge "sacrament houses" remain. The Reformation which began here in 1523 seems even now to hold the place which it held then ; not, probably, in respect of the fervour of its adherents, but in relation to the old religion which went before.

I witnessed an extraordinary scene at St. Elizabeth's, which I will try to describe. While examining the church, which, like all "Protestant" churches, had been locked up, and was only accessible through five silver groschen, I suddenly observed persons entering and walking eastward, as if for service. A bell also began to ring from the tower of the church. Was there to be a service? I inquired of my attendant. Yes, was the reply. So I took a seat and prepared to assist at it.

Several respectable well-dressed men—tradesmen of the town apparently—took their places north and south in the choir stalls, which "remain as in times past ;" while a few stragglers, men and women, occupied places in the nave. And then I began to expect the "minister," and to conjecture what the service might be. But suddenly, to my surprise, one of the respectable men went off with a Latin antiphon, and the rest took it up, and on they hurried through an hour service of the Roman Breviary! It was the most absurd and ludicrous imitation of the most careless and slovenly and perfunctory type of a Roman ministration it had ever been my lot to hear. The burlesque lasted for an hour, during which persons might be seen laughing heartily ; and then it came to an abrupt end ; and the performers departed hastily, as they had arrived.

I arrested one of them, and begged for an explanation of this painful exhibition, and of the position of those who had acted in it. I used the words "*Breviarium Romanum*," "*Ad Vesperas*," "*Completerium* ;" but he said he was quite ignorant of Latin, and did not know whether those words explained the service or not. However, he kindly consented to show me the manuscripts from which he had been singing. It was a jumble of the vespers and compline offices written out and sung by rote ; and I found the

singers to be the paid choirmen of the Protestant Church of St. Elizabeth, and the *reason* to hang upon the tenure of a considerable endowment from the chapter of the Cathedral of St. John Baptist, which would be taken away the moment that the office should cease to be sung! The priest's part should be sung by one of the clergy; as, no doubt, the whole should be sung as worship. But not so. The clergy avoid it: it is sung chiefly for the money. It is in the bond that they *should* sing. So sing they must, as seldom as possible—once a month or twice—and with more irreverence and contempt than it is possible to describe. It is difficult to say how discreditable to both sides—to the Roman cathedral and to the Protestant St. Elizabeth's—is the continuance of this enormous profanity.

No sooner was the burlesque ended, than the real service of the Protestants began. The organ pealed forth the magnificent hymn of Luther, and men and women, chiefly poor, began to arrive. And now for the daily evening service of the Protestants of Breslau. Let there be no mistake. Let those who use the word "Protestant" in England, so ignorantly, learn. The thing at Dresden is a degeneracy. At Berlin it is a modern device. The angry men at St. George's-in-the-East, the sober men at St. George's, Hanover Square, have not got the thing at all. This at Breslau is the model of Protestantism—the only true Protestantism—the traditional Protestantism of 1529, when the Elector of Saxony, and the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Prince of Anhalt, and the deputies *protested* in the Diet of Spire against the Edict of Worms. Let me describe it as I see it now, recalling St. Elizabeth's at Breslau.

The organ is sounding out the hymn of Luther, while a young man, of grave and earnest aspect, arrayed in a black vestment with a white ruff, after the pictures of Fathers Luther and Melancthon, ascends the pulpit. With much devotion and gravity he *reads* a lecture, and then turning eastward, all the congregation turn eastward, while he sums up with the Lord's Prayer. And now there is a pause. While the preacher descends, all eyes are on the altar, the "high altar," over which a colossal crucifix,

with the Blessed Virgin and St. John on either side, is exalted, and upon which two high candles burn in the broad light of day. And presently the grave young man issues forth from the sacristy—yes, there is a “sacristy” too, and with an altar in it, “as in times past” No longer in his black vestment, he is now robed in a surplice, and that as short as the most advanced “Puseyite” could desire. Turning his back to the people, and standing in the midst of the altar, he “intones” or sings his prayers. Finally, he turns round, and waving his hand in the form of the cross, he blesses the people, and they depart.

He must have been in much stronger health now (his wife writes), for I find this entry in my journal:—

“*Sunday, April 21.*—James preached in the evening at Westminster Abbey, at the request of the Dean.\* It was a crowded congregation, and most attentive: a striking sight. Martin Luther’s hymn was sung not only by the fine choir, but by that great mass of persons. I never heard it sound so grand. I was most agreeably surprised in the strength and clearness of my husband’s voice. He preached for three-quarters of an hour; his voice quite filled the nave, and it appeared to be no effort to him, nor was he the worse for the exertion.”

\* Now Archbishop of Dublin.

## CHAPTER XI.

### NEWLAND.

1861-1865.

“O happy days, O months, O years,  
Which, even in this dim world of woe,  
'Tis now impossible can show  
The print of grief, the stain of tears !

“O blessed times, which now no more  
Exposed to chance or change remain ;  
Which having been, no after stain  
Can dim the brightness that ye wore !”

JOHN REGINALD PYNDAR, third Earl Beauchamp, married, in 1814, Charlotte, only daughter of John, first Earl of Clonmell. This lady had a large fortune and died childless in 1846. She had expressed a wish that some part of her fortune should be devoted to founding an almshouse for aged agricultural labourers ; and her husband directed in his will (made in 1847) that £60,000 should be devoted to the erection and endowment of almshouses at Newland, in the county of Worcester.

Lord Beauchamp died in 1853, and his wife's nephew, the Hon. Charles Grantham Scott, to whom he had bequeathed his estate of Newland, gave a piece of land for the almshouses, close to the then existing old wooden

parish church, supposed to have been built in the time of Edward III.

After six years' delay and litigation, an order and a scheme, for the management of the charity, was in 1859 issued by the Court of Chancery. It was to be managed by twelve trustees, and a private Act of Parliament was obtained, enabling them to purchase the advowson of the living of Newland. In 1861 it became vacant, and was offered by the trustees to Mr. Skinner, together with the office of Wardenship of the projected almshouses.

The parish was very small, containing only thirty-six families, with four in the hamlet of Woodsfield, and the whole thing seemed to be within his powers. He accepted the charge, and in October, 1861, took up his abode at Malvern Link, for the land on which the almshouses, the new church, and the Warden's house were to stand had not even been drained. His wife's journal notes on the day after their arrival :

*October 10.*—As soon after breakfast as possible, James and I walked over to our own little parish of Newland, the scene of his future labours, about a mile from Somers Villa, the house we are now in. The country is entirely new to me, and much delighted I am with it ; and on such a brilliant morning as we fortunately have, the fine scenery looks to great advantage.

We first went into the curious little old church, built entirely of wood, as old as the fourteenth century ; hardly another like it in England. It is to come down when the new one is built, though it seems rather sad, I think, to contemplate this necessity. We afterwards went to the little village school, and to one or two cottages, with all of which we were much pleased, and the poor people seem to look forward with great satisfaction to having a *resident* clergyman among them. I believe it is forty years since the parish has had that blessing.

It was the beginning of a time of exceptional happiness and beauty. For the sake of those who remember what that home at Newland became, it is impossible to withhold the following extract from a letter of Mrs. Skinner's to her mother, with its vivid account of their first days in the neighbourhood :—

Somers Villa, Malvern Link, October 17, 1861.

. . . We had a comfortable journey down here, and found everything ready for us. I found a letter from George, saying that he would bring the children on Friday or Saturday at latest. As Taylor's men said the things would be down the day after us, there was no time to be lost in finding some place to receive them. The only thing we could do was to rent three empty rooms in a house not far from us. This done, we put the matter from our minds for a bit, and the morning being exquisite, and the country around as lovely and magnificent as any I have ever seen, we enjoyed our walk to Newland, about one mile from this house. There James showed me the site of the almshouses, and where our house is to be, and no words can tell you how beautiful the spot is. We went into the little ancient church ; it is in a *rickety* state, but nicely arranged, and it seems sad that it should come down, which you know is contemplated as soon as the chapel to the almshouses is built, which is also to be the parish church. We afterwards went to the school, and to some of the houses, and then home to the Link. As none of our packages had come, and we had nothing to do, and were too tired to walk any more, we took a carriage and drove to Malvern Wells, through the most lovely scenery ; calling on our way on the Pembertons, who were not at home. Next day, Friday, we began to get anxious at the non-arrival of our goods. Towards the afternoon, just as it began to rain heavily, some, but not all, of our things began to arrive ; among others, several cases of books. There was no room to bring them into the house, so they had to be unpacked at the entrance ; and James and I and the two maids seized upon the books and rushed into the house with them as fast as they were



unpacked. Oh, how dreadfully tired we were! Poor James had his sermon to prepare for the next day, and many arrangements to make. He looked so dreadfully ill and worn out, I quite dreaded his falling ill. To our relief, the men came to say that the rest of the vans, through some mismanagement of the railway authorities, had gone astray; it was really a relief, because we felt we had time to look around us. So we went to a farmer in Newland, and asked if he could help us to stow away some of our common things; he was very good-natured, and offered us the use of a famous dry loft, which would hold an immense quantity. About three o'clock the dear children arrived with George, they were in high spirits and very little tired; both James and I were much the reverse. The darlings cheered us, and we had a much better night, and got up on Sunday morning refreshed. It was fortunately a most lovely day; we all walked to Newland. The little church was well filled, chiefly with poor; and oh, what a happiness it was to see dear James in his own church again! I felt quite *ashamed* of the distress I had lately allowed myself to be in, when all the signal blessings God had given me crowded upon my mind as I knelt in that quiet little church; and thought how different all *might* have been. They seem all a nice set of people—well-behaved, and attentive, and simple minded; they all join heartily in the service. There is only a little harmonium which leads some school children, who have remarkably good voices. This is the choir at present! Next Sunday I am to play. As the foundations of our new house have not yet begun to be dug, we are not likely to be troubled with the sight of our furniture again at present. I am now getting over my fatigues, and I hope James will not be the worse, though since Sunday he has been *very* unwell. I wish we were rather nearer to our parish, though we are lucky to be so near; but it is hard work to walk there and back, besides walking about the parish, going to the school, talking, etc., etc. I think this fine air will agree well with all of us.

Alas! before another Sunday came round the Vicar

of Newland was so ill as to be unable to leave his bed. He had not had so bad an attack for two years, and the verdict of the Malvern doctor was, "This is no place for you; you must quit it without delay, and go to Madeira for the winter." It was a discouraging beginning to his new life; but serious as the attack was, he rallied from it sooner than he had ever done in the like case. Fortunately there was no difficulty about parish work in the mean time, as a curate had already been installed, and on November 3 Mr. Skinner preached for the first time in his little church, and considered himself recovered. He lost no time in making himself acquainted with his parishioners, and formed many plans for increased church services. His great desire was to increase the number of Celebrations. Until the last few years there had been only three Celebrations yearly at Newland, and there had frequently been a difficulty in getting the requisite number of communicants even at Christmas and Easter; in the late incumbent's time there had been a celebration every second month. At Christmas Mr. Skinner presented his parishioners with a "Newland Almanack," and prefixed to it a pastoral letter in which he says—

Once at least in every month, and as often as there is a red line in this calendar, the Blessed Sacrament will be offered to you in Newland Church. I do not wish any to come to it who are not prepared to come, and who do not know Whom they receive when they "eat that bread and drink that cup." But I am ready to instruct and to prepare as many as will come to me to be made ready by prayer, or by "ghostly," or spiritual counsel, or, if need be, by the "benefit of absolution." In a short time, if it pleases God, we shall have a new and enlarged parish church built for us. We shall then have daily services—twice a day at the least.

Nothing shall hinder, but we shall have, without stint, the full provision which the Church of England has made for your wants and for the wants of all her children. Surely it will be a good rule for us to try to give to God our very best offering in return for His so much love to us. Meantime, let us train and prepare ourselves for our new church and for those fuller services—that great blessing. Just as that blessing, when it comes, shall in turn, as I hope, train and prepare us for the enjoyment of God, face to face, in heaven.

In the pastoral letter in the almanack for 1863, it is noted that there were twenty-three Celebrations in 1862, as against seven in the previous year, and before seven years had passed Newland parish had the blessing of a daily Celebration, at which worshippers and communicants were never wanting. And this is noteworthy, for it might have been thought that it would be impossible to keep up this service in a very small agricultural parish. But, indeed, from the first the people seem to have responded to the instruction given to them.

One who knew the parish at this time writes :

I suppose the first *week-day* service that St. Leonard's, Newland, had seen for many a year was on Epiphany, 1862. The vicar had full service in the morning with the Celebration of Holy Communion. It was considered quite an innovation, but there was a fairly good congregation and more communicants than the last Sunday celebration. During Holy Week this year the daily services, both morning and evening, for an agricultural parish, were well attended, and on Good Friday and Easter Day the little church was crowded, while on Christmas Day, 1863, it was so full that there was hardly standing room. There were two Celebrations and an increase of fifty communicants. The Bishop of Worcester had held a confirmation in this little church the previous October, for thirty-six candidates, amongst whom was the vicar's only child, Agnes. The foundation stone of the new church and almshouses

was laid on April 23, 1862, by the Dowager Countess Beauchamp, widow (by a second marriage) of the Founder, and the ground lying between the old church and that given for the almshouses was consecrated as a burial-ground for Newland parish. It had never possessed one before, the *Capella de Newland*, as it is called in old deeds, having been served by the monks of Malvern Abbey to which it was attached.

The following letter from the Vicar of Newland to his wife, who was absent from home, gives a bright glimpse of home life, and an account of the first Church Congress :—

Malvern Link, July 12, 1862.

. . . Here I am, safe and sound again, among our pets—safe and sound also, praised be God. I found them charmingly well, and so glad to get me back. Aggie talking of nothing but her prospect of breakfasting with me next morning, and the pleasure of making my mess. Insomuch that I proposed that I should save her a bad night of exciting expectation, and have my breakfast then and there on the spot. Maggie was in all the dignity of landladyhood, bursting with importance, mingled with a tinge of misgiving, lest I should not like the minced beef. She felt it her duty to go out and in; and ring the bell; and give orders; and countermand the orders when given; and ask about tea before dinner was over; and “How about hot water?” and “Now, take your hot water, uncle, before it gets cold;” and “When shall we have prayers?” and “Now ring the bell and begin,” and so on. This morning, long before half-past eight, I was disturbed at my toilet by the housekeeper’s knock. “Are you ready for prayers, uncle?” “Yes, dear, when the time for prayers has arrived I shall be ready.” “Oh!” And then off I heard her little feet scamper to the Petfordian domain in the basement, her heart bursting with the dinner for to-day!

Aggie—kept awake half the night with wishing for breakfast time to come—was in her place, presiding over the teapot and the cosy, instantly after prayers, and very full of delight to her was that

steaming urn and little crockery teapot. But my mess, on which she had greatly reckoned as an exercise of skill and affection, could not be made; so I dispensed with it, and gave the surplus of the cream to Aggie herself, which greatly contributed to reconcile her to the disappointment. Poor dear Mary looks sweet as sugar, and says, "Oh how I should like to breakfast with uncle, but Miss Levien does not like it, and so I suppose I shall not."

They are dear good little pets, and seem so anxious to be pleasant company to me.

Now I hear you saying, "Why have you never told me anything of your proceedings at Oxford?" So, then, here goes.

. . . Immediately on arrival, I had luncheon in the common room, where a pleasant party were assembled, and then off with a brother of Walton's to the theatre. There I saw hosts of friends, almost everybody I had ever seen or known for twenty years past, and most delightful it was to greet the old familiar faces. This really was the charm of the gathering. I need not say what the papers were, for you may read that in the public accounts. But this I will say, that *I* did my part uncommonly well, and I believe it was one of the most difficult to do; I *listened* to the wise and the foolish with equal perseverance to the end. Ellicott read his paper in the morning, before I arrived, and he had left Oxford before I could get near him. Some good Cambridge men spoke—the best, by far, Harold Browne; Howson also distinguished himself. The tone of the Cambridge men did not make them shine at Oxford, I am afraid. There was a hard-headed utility in their views, but a want, for the most part, of the more delicate shades of feeling which indicate a deep and thoughtful philosophy in things ecclesiastical. I should except George Williams. . . . I was much struck with the contrast which Carter and Pusey and Massingberd and others presented in all this. We had some very delicate and difficult subjects—"Sisterhoods," for instance—which brought all this out. But there was a marvellous spirit of harmony and unity and love pervading the whole Congress, for which we cannot be too thankful; and if we owe it to anything under God's Spirit, we owe it to the skill and

tact and amazing judgment with which the Bishop of Oxford conducted the proceedings. At one of the evening meetings, Meyrick read a paper on our relations to the Continental Churches. I had sent in my name to speak upon it ; but long before it came to my turn, the temper of the meeting had waxed so warm that I foresaw a great row. The Bishop, with most consummate skill, shifted the scene, and passed to another subject which was a much less exciting one. Next morning he said to me, "I hope you were not offended that I did not call on you to speak last night." "No, my lord, not a bit ; I saw what was brewing, and I think you did most wisely to pass on to another subject." "Yes," he said, "in that electric condition of the atmosphere, it was not safe to invite a storm, so I omitted to call on you or on any one to say anything."

. . . I will just add, particularly, the order of my day, and you will be amazed at the extent of the grind.

Tuesday. Arrived at 1 p.m.

Theatre from 2 to 5.15, without intermission.

5.30 to 6.30. Evensong (choral) in Merton Chapel, a glorious Gregorian service.

6.30 to 8. Dinner and dessert in Merton Hall. Here Mildmay, Lawrell, Beresford Hope, and lots of friends, most jolly.

I was so knocked up that I could not go to the "evening" in the townhall ; so at 9 o'clock I went to my rooms.

Wednesday. Called and up at 6.15. At 7.15 down, and in the vestry of the chapel, which is also the parish church of St. John Baptist in Oxford, and where all the services for the Congress were appointed to be held. Had been invited to assist in the Celebrations. These services were all special, and there was no regular staff of clergy to assist the incumbent of the church, who is a Mr. Serjeant, a cousin of the Bishop of Oxford's, and a Fellow of Merton. It was hardish work for me, and perhaps I ought to have declined, but I could not resist such a privilege. Well, at 7.30, the Bishop of Oxford, and the Bishop of Tasmania, myself, and Serjeant took our places at the altar—Tasmania celebrant ; I gospeller ; Serjeant epistoller ; and the Holy Communion

was administered to the great body of the Congress in Oxford. After the blessing we immediately went to matins, the Bishops remaining in their places, Serjeant and I taking it between us.

At 9.30, breakfast.

At 10.30 to the theatre. Papers and discussion till 1.15.

1.15 to 2. Luncheon in Merton Hall.

2.30 to 5.15. Theatre again. Papers and discussion.

5.30 to 6.30. Chapel at Merton (full choral).

6.30 to 8. Dinner in Merton Hall, a large and most pleasant party. Swinny of Cuddesdon, Butterfield the architect, and the rest—more than twenty in number.

8 to 10. Meeting in townhall.

Thursday. Up at 6.15 again. In vestry by 7.15: prepared for a grand choral celebration. Bishop of Oxford on throne; Bishop of Tasmania next him; Lowder as a fourth priest; Serjeant celebrant; Lawrell gospeller; myself epistoller and assistant. Most magnificent service; nearly four hundred communicants, including Bishops of Capetown and Honolulu, besides Oxford and Tasmania. After this I was too tired for matins and went to breakfast.

10.30 to 1.15. At the theatre. Papers and discussions.

1.15. To Balliol College. Luncheon the first with Furse, and Jenny, his dear little wife. Obligated to hurry off to All Souls' College to answer an invitation from the warden of that college, who has taken a leading part in the Congress, to have my portrait taken, in a group of the members, by a photographic artist, and to lunch, the second time, with them afterwards. Here I met the Bishop of Capetown and chatted with him of old days; the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland and M.P. for University of Dublin, Joseph Napier, whom I met at Innsbruck two summers ago, and took for a self-appointed parish clerk to me, when I read the prayers on Sunday in the hotel; Sir Charles Anderson, whom you remember meeting at Burton Agnes; and many others. At 1.30 we formed ourselves in a group: the four Bishops in the centre; the taller men behind and the smaller in front. I have the satisfaction of being taken standing next to dear T. Carter of Clewer.

It will be an interesting group. After this operation, which was long and tedious, but which the Bishop of Oxford and Archdeacon Denison contrived to lighten by their jokes and good-humoured chaff, we went to luncheon in the Warden of All Souls' house. There I met Mr. Cust, now the Vicar of St. Mary's, Reading, who re-introduced himself to me, as having met you and me at Huntsmoor. Do you remember singing with him and Lady Emma his wife?

Then back again to the theatre till nearly 6. Then to chapel at Merton. Then I went to All Souls' Hall, to dine with F. L. Very pleasant, but the ale of tremendous power, quite beyond me.

At 9 off again to the townhall, where Bishop of Tasmania on Synods. Capetown very interesting, so also Joseph Napier. Met Richards of Farlington, Finlay and his wife, and hosts of others. Got home to bed a little before 12, going *en route* to revisit Newman's old rooms at Oriel, which a friend of mine was inhabiting.

Friday. Up 7.30. Breakfast 9, in Merton. Men all going down.

10.30 to St. Mary's. Litany, and a magnificent sermon from S. O. on African Missions and dear Bishop Mackenzie. Then to meeting on that Mission's affairs in theatre: painful discussion upon the fighting with the natives. "Was it right?" Most terribly painful. Pusey spoke condemning it; so Selwyn, also from Cambridge. I agree with them, but deprecated the discussion at such a moment. Capetown spoke most *deliciously*. I could tell you volumes of intensely interesting matter on this head, but I can no more. Did not leave theatre till 2.45; snatched a sandwich and a glass of beer with Mildmay in the buttery of Merton, and then off to catch 3.25 train.

Found two old friends in the carriage, one of whom (a Fellow of Trinity, Oxford) not seen for twenty years! and so home to Malvern.

Praised be God for all His mercy.

He writes in June, 1863, of the death of Mrs. Oliver Raymond, his wife's mother, who had ever been a loving mother to him.



. . . She who "bore children and guided the house, and gave none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully"—the mother of all who came within her care, has gone to her rest. She died about the rising of the sun last Monday, the first of the summer days, and on Friday her body was laid in the grave in the face of many to whom, all her life, God had given her for a light. Day by day, from her death, the prayers which she so loved went on in the parish church, and her husband and children found in them their best consolation. Her hands were crossed upon her breast in death; and indeed it was the cross which most she strove in life to take up, and to cling to as all her hope. At her burial at Middleton the "mourners" were themselves the choir, and they prayed and sang with earnest tongues, and with a good courage all their own. It is good to think of her, whom we so loved, at rest. Formed by the grace of God in the school of Christ, she learned all she knew from Him by whom she was called silently and unostentatiously to teach others. There are now alive many holy and useful men and women, who trace, under God, all the good that is in them to her sweet life. It is something to have had to do with the training of two brothers and three sons for dedication to God in the holy office of the priesthood. What they owe to her God will repay.

The house for the Warden was the first part completed of the buildings at Newland, and in November, 1863, he and his family took possession of their new abode. Amongst his papers were found the prayers, written in pencil, used on this day at family prayer:—

We yield Thee hearty thanks, O Lord our God, for Thy great goodness in mercifully ordering our way to this our present earthly dwelling-place, and for all Thy gracious providence in leading us into it, and settling us in the same in peace and quietness. Send Thy Holy Spirit to go before us, and with us, and after us, in all our going in and coming out of this house. Mercifully assist us who put our trust in Thee in every duty each one of us has to

in this place ; and vouchsafe to be our Companion every day, from morning to night and night to morning ; that we may love Thy presence and walk in it vigilantly, and being delivered from all errors and adversities, may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness ; and grant us Thy peace all the days of our life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, we beseech Thee, to all Thy servants who live in this house, the spirit of mutual love and duty one to the other, and above all of grateful obedience to Thee : give us comfort and support under all circumstances of our life, and Thy merciful guidance unto the end, that living in all holy and godly conversation, we may be afflicted by no adversity, and may finally attain to the perpetual enjoyment of Thy loving mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The new Church of St. Leonard and the almshouses were not completed until the following year, 1864. On Sunday, July 17, the last services were held in the old oaken church, the spiritual home of many generations. One who was present wrote at the time :

“ The last Sunday in the dear little old church ! Enormous congregations both morning and evening. Not a third part could find room inside ; so as the weather was dry and *very* hot, the windows were taken out on the north side, and a great number of people joined in the service, sitting, standing, and kneeling on the grass.

On the next Thursday, July 21, the new church was consecrated, and the almshouses were dedicated, by the Bishop of Worcester. He was met at the great gate by a procession including about sixty clergy, and all walked round the east and south sides of the quadrangle, chanting Psalms ciii. and lxxii. Then, halting opposite to the great gate, the Bishop prayed :

O God, from Whom all good gifts do come, we heartily thank Thee that Thou didst put into the heart of Thy servant John Reginald, sometime Lord Beauchamp, to found and of his charity to endow for ever these almshouses to the honour of Thy name and the comfort of Thy poor ; grant, we beseech Thee, that they who shall here profit by this Thy bounty may truly and godly serve Thee for ever and ever ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The procession then moved round the west and north sides of the quadrangle, still chanting, and, returning to the great gate, after *Veni Creator* had been sung the Bishop pronounced that—

Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to allow this charitable work, and to accept these almshouses for the comfort of His poor, we hereby pronounce this house of prayer and of alms to have been in all things duly completed, and we declare the same to be for ever open : in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The consecration of the church then took place. Thus this beautiful work was begun, a gift from Ireland to England. For it was but the fulfilment of the pious thought of a noble Irish lady, and a large portion of the fortune which she possessed had been devoted to this charity.

There is nothing lovelier or more perfect of its kind in England ; it seems, as the late Bishop Forbes said, "like a bit of the Middle Ages let down amongst us." A traveller on the road through the village common of Newland might pass the almshouses without observing more than clustered chimneys rising behind a belt of trees, and a handsome gateway, but within the deep-arched portal there is what almost seems an enchanted scene, a very paradise of peaceful and holy delight. The whole place has already a look of

age, partly from the luxuriant flowering creepers with which the buildings are covered, partly from the ancient elms which shade the smooth turf of the quadrangle, surrounded by a broad gravel terrace walk. The east side is formed by the church and the Warden's house, connected by a cloister, the south and west sides by the almshouses, while the north is left open to the view of the Malvern Hills. There is an entrance to the church by the south porch through the cloister for dwellers in the quadrangle, while the north porch opens on the village common. In the buildings there are rooms for twenty-four or more alms-people, married or single, who are received from any county in England, and have an apartment of three rooms assigned to each, with a pension varying from seven and sixpence to twelve shillings a week and allowances of gas and fuel. The trustees of the charity were also ordered by the Court of Chancery to "establish and maintain a school of industry for ten or more children," to "reside on the premises, and be boarded and clothed free of charge," to "assist as choristers in the celebration of divine service in Newland Church, as the Warden should from time to time direct." None were elected who had not really good voices ; thus an excellent choir was insured for the church.

Here, in this home of devotion and charity, a season of such happiness and beautiful brightness was granted to the Warden and his household as is seldom the lot of God's servants on earth. His aged stepmother, accompanied by his only sister, had, at eighty-three, left her Aberdeen home to settle near her beloved son. No warmer love ever existed between a mother and son than between these two ;

and until her death, nine years later, it was one of the chief objects of his life to add to her happiness and comfort. The orphan children of a brother of Mr. Skinner also lived at Malvern Link, to be under his wing, and his beloved brother George, with his two girls, still made part of his own household, so that the quadrangle and the Warden's Lodge were full of the sound of merry young laughter, and the voice of joy and health was in the house.

The services, the beauty of the church and place, and, perhaps more than all, the preaching attracted many besides parishioners, and on Sundays the church was always crowded; during the summer it often happened that numbers were unable even to get into the porch. The seats were all free; but, to prevent parishioners from being crowded out by visitors, none but parishioners were allowed to take seats until the bell had ceased ringing. Then what a rush there used to be for seats! There certainly was no room left for any "aggrieved" one who might loiter in during the exhortation.

The old wooden church was taken down in 1865, when the vicar writes to his parishioners:

You will not be sorry to look upon the dear old church at the top of the Newland Almanack once again. Sadly forlorn and deserted it looks beside its new and more ambitious sister. But it will not be easy to rob you of your love and reverence for those old oaken timbers which have borne the sanctuary of God in this parish for so many centuries. It will be good for you that such love and reverence should never die. It will be good for your children and for your children's children to know and to remember what that little church has been to the Newland people for five hundred years of England's most stirring history; for, indeed, the new church itself is nothing to us unless it be the continuing of

the old. Bearing the same dedication to God and S. Leonard, deacon and confessor, our new church appeals to the same traditions handed down from the first days of Christianity in England to our fathers and their children, and onward to us ; or else it appeals to nothing which we can regard.

But the remembrance of the little ancient church is not likely to die out. A portion of it is now being restored to serve as a "lych-house," or sacred chamber, in which the bodies of our departed pensioners may rest in stillness and safety, between the hours of death and burial. This will enable us to secure greater reverence towards the remains of the dead, and more security for the health of the living, than is often possible in the small, and sometimes crowded, rooms of cottages.

The lych-house has been built, opening from the cloister. Besides this memorial, a lofty stone cross covers the exact site of the altar of the old church, bearing the inscription :



+ Deo + Optimo + Maximo +  
 + Salvatori + nostro +  
 + qui + proposito + sibi + gaudio +  
 + sustinuit + crucem +



+ Sacram + in + memoriam +  
 + Sancti + Leonardi + apud + Newland + Sacelli +  
 + jam + inde + seculo + a + decimo + quarto + stantis +  
 + nuper + demoliti +  
 + cujus + super + altari + hic + posito +  
 + Sacra + sanctissima + mysteria +  
 + sacerdotes + de + Newland +  
 + quinque + per + secula + exequabantur  
 + quorum + supremus + et + minimus +



+ hanc + crucem +  
 + e + beneficentia + fidelium +  
 + dicavit +  
 + A + D + MDCCCLXVI +



+ Quam + toto + penitus + dilectam + corde + fovebam ×  
 + Defuncto + est + eadem +  
 crux + mihi + sola + salus



It is hard not to linger too long on halcyon days, forgetting that they cannot have the same charm for others as for those who shared in them. The vision of that lovely and peaceful quadrangle, with the blue-cloaked pensioners slowly wending their way to daily prayer, and the tall form of their Warden passing through the cloister, is one that can never fade from the hearts of those who for a time dwelt there.

The following letter is written by one who lived there for many years :—

Those early days at Newland—what a charm they had ! The whole scene comes back to me, after long years, like some tender vision of loveliness seen in the glow of morning. Alas ! the “light of setting suns” seems on it now.

The “college,” with its picturesque little archways, its charming church and house, its smooth grass and stately elms, made a most characteristic framework to a picture that hardly seemed to belong to the hard realities of these times.

There, on a sunny day, the old pensioners in their blue gowns sauntered to and fro, the bright girls from the Warden’s home

fitting by ; the Warden himself strolling out with a kind greeting, and a word to one and another that left a smile of pleasure behind it. His wife, whose fairylike swiftness as she came and went often made us laugh, was now beside him, now in one of the houses, now out again, then vanishing among her flowers. Pleasant voices, eager helpfulness, gentle ministration, there were everywhere.

I think I can see the Warden still, as he used to be in those dear old days—tall and with a singular dignity of bearing, already grey in hair and beard, pale and worn as one who had indeed borne "the burden and heat of the day," but with a face full of brightness and beautiful with intellectual power. His dark-brown eyes seemed to reflect every change of mood and thought, flashing with chivalrous enthusiasm as he defended the good old cause, or melting into tenderest sympathy at some pathetic tale. As he went about the quadrangle in his cassock and cap, or stood gently looking down (he almost always had to look down) at some eager speaker, I used to fancy him like those figures who flit through the pages of history in the days of strife between Puritans and Cavaliers.

It seemed to me that there was ever a special grace and fitness in all his surroundings. The pretty house, with its essential refinement, and artistic memorials of wanderings in many lands ; the graceful little mistress of it, with her unfailing deftness, readiness, and tact ; the daughter, with her refined loveliness and almost startling beauty of mind and character ; her sweet sister-friends, scarcely less the Warden's children than herself ;—the whole charm of that unique home was just right, just what it should have been for him.

Of course, one so well known and beloved had many outside his parish to claim his assistance and care. One of the features of that Newland life was the constant coming of friends from wider circles, bringing the stir of the world into that calm retreat. Mr. Skinner was not a clergyman who could be actually "buried in the country." How they used to come, those many friends ! Eager, cordial, rejoicing, or sad and cast down



and sorely in need of comfort, it mattered not—there was room in that large sympathy for all. Clergy of his own school, with their many tales and hearty merriment over bygone misapprehensions and worries ; eager young men, full of hopes, schemes, and fancies ; friends fresh from the busy stir and interests of London society ; weary toilers ; laden souls full of doubts and fears—all these came, and many more. Sometimes claims made upon his time were somewhat inconsiderate, and those who enjoyed his sympathy were apt to forget that he had many poor people, and many sermons, and a great many books to occupy him. But his wife was always at hand—always understanding every change of look, every glance or sigh. Her unfailing tact often came to his aid, and secured for him a little quiet and rest. Their union was indeed a perfect one—perfect in those bright days ; perfect in that day of sorrow when they went out hand-in-hand from the room where they had taken their last look at the fair, still face, dearest to them on earth—went out broken-hearted, but brave, to comfort each other and serve God in the world till eventide. May I not say, perfect still ? for surely death must be too weak to change the union of two such souls ?

Dear Newland ! Dear old days ! Looking back upon their sweetness, I see more and more that the spell, the charm of all that formed their bright happiness, was contained in that one word—Love !

He whom we have lost for a little was the centre of all that happiness, and his power came from the strength of love which he possessed. The visible beloved and lovely around him, how unspeakably he loved them ! But more, far more, the love of the Altogether Lovely shone through his life, and gave power to his beautiful words. He loved that Divine Master to whom his whole being was consecrated with a sensible intensity of which I feel I have no right to speak. Only we cannot forget the thrill of overpowering emotion in his sermons, the faltering voice with which the history of the Passion used to come from him.

It is impossible to put the sweetness of those bygone days into words, but those who remember will ever cherish them, and

thank God and take courage that such a life was still possible in these darker days. They will dwell on the recollection until our little pasts are swallowed up in the great future—until the most perfect earthly beauty and happiness are more than fulfilled in the unspeakable and eternal joy which it hath not entered into the heart of men to conceive.

There are some lines from the “*Lyra Innocentium*” written out in pencil by Mr. Skinner, apparently at the same time that he wrote a prayer for a blessing on the new home :—

“A holy household ; yet beware !  
Even here may lurk a snare.  
These home delights, so keen and pure,  
May not for aye endure.  
Ere long, perchance, a sterner sound  
Will summon : where wilt thou be found ?  
Even holy homes may hearts beguile,  
And mar God’s work awhile !”

## CHAPTER XII.

### SPIRITUAL WORK AT NEWLAND.

1863-1866.

"But first, and chiefest, with thee bring  
Him, that soars on golden wing,  
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,  
The cherub, Contemplation."

FROM this time Newland became a centre of vigorous Church life and religious teaching ; young clergymen often came there for a time as curates, to learn and to read before undertaking larger work, and the help which they received was perhaps one of the chief ways in which the Vicar of Newland, himself unable to undertake hard mission work, was of use to the Church.

"Wouldst thou go forth to bless, be sure of thine own ground ;  
Fix well thy centre first, then draw thy circles round,"

has been well said, and it is a truth about which Mr. Skinner felt very strongly, believing that work, during the first year or two of priesthood, which gave leisure for thought and study, was the most profitable in the end. The inscription over the study of Zachary Ursinus was put up on the cross in the library at Newland :

Amice quisquis huc venis  
 Aut tace  
 Aut agita paucis  
 Aut discede  
 Aut me laborantem adjuva.

I look forward to great happiness in being associated with you in our work for some time longer (he writes in 1866 to a young friend who had just received priest's orders), though I feel that the time *must* come when I shall lose you, through the necessity, which will be inevitable, of introducing you to larger and wider fields of labour.

There was nothing like Newland Church then in the neighbourhood, and many earnest spirits were attracted thither, desiring to be further instructed. The following paper seems to have been written for one desiring to devote a week during Lent to special acts of devotion. It was not unusual for people to come for a few days to dwell near the church, for a kind of private Retreat, and the Vicar of Newland did not spare trouble in helping them. He had taken part, by Bishop Wilberforce's invitation, in the Lent Mission held at Marlow in 1865, and this paper may have been drawn up for some one who came under his influence at that time:—

*Mid-Lent, 1865.*

1. Take three days for special preparation of heart and mind —(a) that an earnest *desire* for separation from the world and closer union with Christ may be excited and inflamed within you; (b) that you may go to the special devotions of the following days, not by constraint or formally, but deliberately and with joy and gladness; (c) that you may arrange other matters so as to escape all interruption whatsoever.

2. In each of these three days have regard to the special pre-

sence of God the Holy Trinity, and offer them all three, separately, to the three distinct Persons, and again all three in one to the Blessed Unity, that your three powers of memory, intellect, and will may be fully and wholly consecrated to Him.

Say daily twice, morning and evening, the *Veni Creator* in both forms in the Ordination office.

Use these ejaculations, Jer. ix. 1, 2 ; Ps. lv. 6-8 ; Ps. lxxxiv. 1-13 ; Ps. xlii. ; Ps. xxiii.

Resolve, deliberately, to employ a fixed time at the end of these three days, for special scrutiny of yourself, and offer your resolution to God, saying Ps. cxix. 57-72.

3. Meditate daily upon Moses' retirement in the mount, neither seeing any nor seen by any for forty days and nights.

Upon Abraham's going up into Moriah with Isaac alone, the servants and the ass left behind.

So you propose to be alone with God. None in all the world but He and you ; blind so as to see none but Him, deaf so as to hear none but Him, dumb so as to converse with none but with Him : dead to all else, alive only to Him.

Meditate daily on Jesus' often retirement into the mountain or the desert, to pray, and unite your solitude with His solitude and so try to learn from Him what you must do for the full reparation and restoration of your broken life and what is the end of this retirement.

- (a) Jesus' solitude in His mother's womb for nine months.
- (b) In Nazareth, till He was thirty.
- (c) In wilderness, when He fasted for forty days and forty nights.
- (d) In wilderness of Ephraim (St. John xi. 54).
- (e) In the court (St. Matt. xiv. 23).
- (f) In Tabor (St. Matt. xvi. 1).
- (g) In country of Decapolis (St. Mark vii. 33).
- (h) In Olivet (St. Matt. xxvi. 36-39).
- (i) In the Blessed Eucharist, where in a mystery He is alone.
- (j) After His resurrection forty days on earth almost always alone.

Take one or more of these instances of solitude each day, and dwell thoughtfully upon it, that you may alone converse with Jesus, God and Man, and bring all your life, inner and outer, into His presence, and so derive from His solitude, that yours may be perfected and all your shortcomings supplied.

4. The object with which you are to give up seven days, after these three, to special dedication to God is—

(a) For a thorough scrutiny of all your life, your actions, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly—

Your defects and imperfections.

The causes or roots of these defects.

The means of curing and correcting these defects.

Here you are to read over, carefully, all such causes and such means as have been given to you in writing.

(b) To inspect your heart, your passions, affections, motives, intentions, propensities :

What most wounds and hurts and hinders your spiritual life.

To reduce all such hindrances to the rules that you have received, and to rearrange or rewrite them, if they should have fallen into confusion or disuse.

(c) To consider carefully the special and particular gifts and powers toward the use of which for Him God allures and draws you, or for which you have the greatest need, and to inquire and note down the means of acquiring them and turning them most to profit.

(d) To consider carefully—

Your state of life unto which God has called you.

Its duties, in order.

Your sins and shortcomings and defects in it.

Remedies which you know against these sins and defects.

Remember that salvation is *in* the state into which God calls you, or it is nowhere.

5. To consider carefully that the end of the exercise which you are about to undertake is *your amendment and growth in grace and improvement*, and to take care and to pray against the danger of missing that end and so undertaking the exercise in vain.

## Day I.

To be devoted to the consideration of the end for which you were born.

1. (a) Not many years ago, and you had no being; none spoke of you, or thought of you.

(b) You owe it to God's goodness that He brought you out of that nothing in which you lay, to be what you are, His child, His heir, although He had no need of you.

(c) This your being, the highest and noblest of all creation, is capable of an eternal prolongation and of the most perfect union with God Himself in glory and bliss.

(d) The *end* of your being, therefore, not to make a figure in the world, or to do your own pleasure, but to praise and love and honour and serve God, and at length to enjoy the glory of His kingdom in heaven.

(e) God has given you *means* of reaching this end—

Intellect, to know God.

Will, to love God.

Eyes, to see His works.

Tongue, to praise His name.

All your senses and members to do Him service.

All creatures to help you.

There is nothing which God has made but He has made it for you, to be used for His honour and glory.

2. The emotions which you are to seek to be stirred up in you because of these considerations are—

(a) Humble yourself in the thought of your nothingness.

(b) Thank God for bringing you out of it and giving you life with such an end to live for.

(c) Grieve over your abuse of life and the means of living for such an end as He has given you.

(d) Offer Him yourself anew—body, soul, spirit, with all your powers and affections—professing and declaring that you desire and seek to live but for God and God alone.

You have many suitable prayers and forms for turning this

day's exercise into devotion. Use such as are most suitable and familiar to you. Be careful to kneel at the *beginning* and at the *end*. But, *during* the day's exercise, use such a position as best enables you to fulfil it with self-recollection and without injury to health.

### Day II.

To be devoted to thoughts proper to the purging of your life and a general confession of sin.

1. Place yourself in the presence of God and implore the help of His Holy Spirit. Seek for light to know your state as He knows it, and for gratitude to acknowledge the light already received.

2. Do not go so much into the past years of your life as into the present since your last confession.

(a) Your accustomed sins.

(b) Your perverse tendencies.

(c) Your affections which are least under control and most hindering to you.

(d) The common and ordinary faults, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly.

(e) Your ungratefulness.

(f) Your progress or retrogression in the spiritual life.

(g) Your conduct towards God.

(h) Your conduct towards your neighbour.

(i) Your conduct towards yourself.

Use such prayers and devotions as you have already in use.

Say Ps. li.

### Day III.

Devote this day to the consideration of the results of the last day's work.

1. Return thanks to God for any amendment in your life since last resolutions made, and acknowledge His mercy alone in it and nothing in you.

2. Humble yourself before God, and own that your little advance has been through your own fault, because you have not faithfully and courageously and constantly corresponded with the



light and help which He has given you in prayer and Holy Communion, and at other times and in other ways.

3. Promise that you will for ever praise God for His grace and love vouchsafed to you to withdraw and win you off from so much evil about and around you.

4. Beseech pardon for your unfaithfulness and disloyalty in not answering His calls.

5. Offer your whole heart to Him that He may make Himself Master of it and reign exclusively in it.

6. Pray Him to make you more and more faithful to Him.

Use, as before, such prayers and devotions and materials as you possess, fit for this exercise.

#### Day IV.

Devote this day to the consideration of death, and to the disposing and arranging of all things as if you were immediately to die.

This is the fittest time for such an arrangement of the heart and soul. Therefore let your mind, all day, be as much possessed with the reality of your death, as if you knew for certain that it was to take place to-morrow.

Use the seventh part of the "Paradise of the Christian Soul"

#### Day V.

Devote this day to the consideration of the life of light which God the Holy Ghost gives you in the knowledge and imitation of the life of Jesus Christ.

The object before you is to renew your election in Him by which you bear His Name, are a subject in His kingdom, and are enlisted to fight in His army.

1. Your need of His life and example by which to regulate yours (Rom. viii. 26-30 ; and first Epistle of St. John ii. 6).

2. Dwell on that word "*ought*," which means *must*: not a counsel therefore, but an obligation and a necessity.

3. Bless God for this Great Exemplar.

4. Be humbled, that with His whole life before your eyes, you have ruled yours so little according to it.

5. Offer yourself to Jesus Christ, as a piece of wax, soft and ready to receive His Image, that He may be pleased to imprint His image upon it, and that you may think and speak and act, in all things and ways, as He would think and speak and act.

6. Collect and make an epitome of what Jesus did and suffered for thirty-three years in respect of matters and circumstances which you also have been called to do and suffer.

7. Get rid of fear and shame that *you* should have to do and suffer what He did and suffered ; and blush not to call Him Master.

8. Confess that you have not done and suffered after His example. Remember St. Paul's "glory" in nothing but in the cross by which He was crucified unto the world and the world to Him.

9. Offer your life anew to Christ to be re-modelled after Him.

#### Day VI.

Devote this day to the consideration of your life as *united* to the life of God in Christ. His unspeakable blessings of love to you: Your unspeakable debt of love to Him : His blessing to you :

1. Who it is who gives you blessing.
2. Who *you* are who receive it.
3. Why it is conferred.
4. How, in what measure, with what love.
5. Without any the least desert, but against desert—not only freely, but in *spite* of non-deserving.

Your debt of love—

1. Purity of intention and purpose.
2. Conformity of your will with His Will.

And in order to excite this, consider—

(1) Excellency of your soul, in that God, of His own free will, embraces it.

(2) That your soul has but one regard, eternal union with God—why should you be taken up with anything less ?

(3) That your soul can take in God and be taken in of Him—why should you rest in any creature? Out of the ark, the dove found no rest for her wing; out of God, your soul can find no rest.

(4) The greatness and dignity of a holy life; the peace, the joy, the hope that it brings in the midst of trial outside.

(5) *Compare* the love wherewith you are born up and in to God, and wherewith He embraces you, with the love which carries you into the creature, and wherewith the creature persecutes you.

(6) Think of the saints and their lives in God and their witness for Him. They were what you are. You have same means and graces and gifts.

(7) Think of Christ's love for you, specially in His Passion and death. Before you were born, He thought of you on the cross, and of providing for your spiritual wants; just as a mother prepares cradle and clothes before her child sees the light.

(8) Think of the eternity of God's love. It began with eternity and runs through eternity—that is, it is without beginning or end; and this love is for you.

Use as before prayers which befit these thoughts.

### Day VII.

Devote this day to resolutions of a more pure and holy and devoted life.

Offer them to God.

If you have opportunity, go to Holy Communion with this offering.

If you have the "Introduction to a Devout Life," by St. Francis de Sales, use the protestation in the first part, c. 20; if not, use the act of good resolve in the "Paradise," iv., "Practice of Virtue," p. 47.

Consider that you have now a fresh call to conduct yourself everywhere, at home and abroad, that whosoever shall see you shall know that you have been with God. "This hath God done."

When you return again to your ordinary daily life, be natural

and watchful nevertheless. You will have need of all the powers which you have been seeking to keep you from falling. But be of good heart; and go to your duties brightly and sweetly, and say, "I know Him in whom I trust and believe." God bless and keep you.

J. S.

The "Notes on Humility" seem to have been given as helps to self-examination during a day's private retreat.

*Notes on Humility—how to acquire it.*

First Part.

Pride is inordinate love of self, of one's own excellence, which we inherit from the Fall;—"eritis sicut Dei."

I. The first sin to rise, the last to die; you see it in the infant, and in the aged saint; the most universal, and yet the last to be acknowledged—"Bene practitatum et male cognitum," says Sylvester; and so most difficult to cure: that which you don't know you don't amend.

II. Pride is distinct from ambition, presumption, and vainglory; thus—

Ambition craves for excellence in dignity; presumption craves for excellence in work; vainglory craves for excellence in reputation. But pride is confined to personal excellence.

III. Pride is a mortal sin because and whenever—

1. It includes disrespect towards God:—

(a) Not willing to submit to Him; (b) taking credit to self for what He alone has done; (c) thinking one has deserved what is purely gratuitous.

2. It includes avowed contempt of one's neighbour:—

(a) Not willing to own a lawful superior; (b) despising equals or inferiors in the temper of the Pharisee to the publican.

3. The heart is fixed upon it, as its object, as the end of life.

And this happens when one would rather sin mortally, by breaking a plain law of God, than not gratify one's pride, ambition, presumption, or vainglory. Hence it is a mortal sin for a man to obtain a spiritual or temporal office for which he is unfit, and

which he holds to the damage of the Church or the State ; or for a man or woman to put a scandal in the way of another rather than put off a superfluity in dress or equipage.

IV. Pride, even when it is venial, either through incompleteness of act or deliberation, or through insignificance of matter, is always dangerous and harmful, because (*a*) it is a hinderer of grace, and (*b*) it is a root of evil.

V. St. Thomas and others say that God sometimes permits the pious to fall into such sins as lust and luxury, that they may be humbled by the shame of them, and so be recovered from pride ; which he takes for an evidence of the deadliness of the disease which requires another disease to cure it.

VI. It is remedial to consider—

1. What Holy Scripture says, and through it the Holy Ghost, reprobating and condemning the vice of pride and its associates, praising and commending humility.

2. Humility and self-contempt (the opposites of pride) are the results of a thorough knowledge of our own worthlessness. Therefore it is remedial often and again to contemplate our own vileness, body and soul.

3. Remedial also (*a*) often to consider the example of Christ, in every detail of the incarnate life. (*b*) Prayer, (*c*) attendance at daily Eucharist, (*d*) at every conscious temptation to a proud thought, to make an inner ejaculation to Jesus Christ to be made humble by His humiliation ; to cite a text of Holy Scripture to be used as a sword to kill pride.

4. Remedial also against vainglory ; besides the above, to consider how utterly vain a thing must be which, in God's sight, can not only do nothing for man, but can only do him wrong, which takes away our reward ("Verily they have received their reward"), and in the place of it puts us in the position of objects of God's revenge.

VII. Rash judging or suspecting others is a fruit of pride.

St. Thomas gives three roots or sources of this rash judgment :

1. Being evil one's self, one thinks and speaks evil of others.
2. One dislikes another, or despises or hates him, or is vexed

or angry or envious towards him; and so, on light grounds, judges him hastily, because every one is apt to believe easily what he prefers should be.

3. One has had long and varied experience, and so learns to distrust.

Other causes are—

(a) Too good opinion of one's self compared with another's gifts, leading to depreciation of them.

(b) Credulity—easy ear to uncertain things about others.

(c) Ignorance—by which internally one judges without knowing.

(d) False persuasions. From physiognomy, dress, manner, gestures, etc., one concludes such and such vices.

VIII. 1. It is remedial in general against rash judgments—

(a) to correct one's own faults, by which one will cease to see faults in others, or at least to attribute to others the same motives and intentions of amendment as one has one's self.

(b) To cultivate love which thinketh no evil.

(c) To forget the evil one has seen, and to try to remember the good.

2. It is remedial against—

(a) Too good opinion of self—to remember (as *supra*) and to look to one's own faults.

(b) Credulity—to remember how fallacious all human judgments are, and never to listen to reports of evil.

(c) Ignorance—to remember that all rash judgments, even internal, are hateful to God. Every one has *jus* or right in his good name among men, which you wound when you take it away.

(d) False persuasion—to be charitable.

(e) Evil interpretations—to pray against them daily, and to practise the opposite. "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged" (St. Luke vi.). "Who art thou that judgest another?" (Rom. xiv.). "Judge nothing before the time" (1 Cor. iv.).

3. Against loquacity and lightness and giddy talk—remember St. James i. 26, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this

man's religion is vain." It is a far more grievous injury to one's self than to any other, dissolving favour and friendship with God and peace with and in Christ.

Consider besides the guilt and the gravity of the obligation to make restitution. Consider the rule, "*Quod tibi non vis fieri alteri ne feceris.*"

## Second Part.

I. The whole matter is really seated in the inner life. It is that which, as in the sight of God, has to be examined—the emotions, passions, and hidden *springs* of thought and word and act and look.

II. Let me suppose that I am unjustly rebuked and reproached ; in matter, without adequate foundation ; in a manner exaggerated and untender.

III. What I have to examine my conscience about is the way in which I have taken this visitation and used it—

(1) As towards God.

(2) As towards my own soul.

(3) As towards my neighbour. Let me say the *Veni Creator*, and at the verse—

"Enable with perpetual light  
The dulness of my blindest sight,"

stop—acknowledge my *natural* blindness in spiritual things, and repeat the verse three times.

IV. As towards God. Examine my humility in the light of the following thoughts, cast upon my way of receiving reproach.

1. When we are corrected by any (justly or unjustly), it may be (is it not always?) God who is dealing with us. But He, the Highest of all, is only pleased to *show* Himself to the humble. His correction to those who resist *is* intolerable ; to those who humble themselves it is, as it were, a communing and a co-operation with Him (Ps. xxxiv. 18). He is glorified when, for love of Him, we are abased. "When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up ; and He shall save the humble person" (Job xxii. 29).

2. St. Ignatius says that among refined and cultured people there is far greater need for inner contempt of themselves, and for mortification of the desire for human respect (and, therefore, for humiliation by reproofs and shame), than for corporal austerities.

Jesus elected to be called, and to be, the "outcast" of the people and a "reproach" among men.

It is very common for persons to use words of self-reproach and self-rebuke and self-contempt, who are really very sensitive to the good opinion of others, and whose pride makes them to be wounded to the quick, if others reproach or rebuke them. When we learn to take pleasure in being thought little of, and to despise praise, we are getting near to perfection.

3. If humility does not show itself in our reception of *little* crosses with cheerfulness and acquiescence, it is not true that what makes us patient under *great* crosses *is* humility.

4. The more God has given us of grace and light and opportunities, the more need for our being humbled, because there is the more matter for humility. The more you are in debt, the poorer you ought really to consider yourself to be.

5. St. Ignatius says it is more difficult, and therefore more rare, to mortify the spirit than the body. Philosophy can help men to the latter. Only the Spirit of Jesus teaches the former: and they who never learn *it* do not learn *Him*. To bear external evils is only the husk of patience; to bear the inner wounds of the spirit is to have the *substance* of patience and humility, which alone can breed patience.

6. Humility is the first gift to which other gifts are liberally added. Forgiveness and peace and favour with God come generously behind, but none of them before humility. The deepest valleys receive the most water from the lofty mountain-tops. If, first, the vessel of the soul is not emptied, wholly of itself, there will be no room for God to fill it with Himself.

7. God overrules every event in the life of each of His children for the supply of the need—and the spiritual need—which He knows to exist in each, and which He must be trusted to supply in His own way. The real ever-pressing question which



the soul has to put to itself, daily and hourly, in the presence of each detail of the special Providence of God, who made that soul for His own glory, is this: "Am I humbly giving God thanks, and rejoicing in Him and in His will evermore?"

V. 1. As towards my own soul; let me examine—

(a) The end of probation, sanctification, salvation, through purgation, mortification, contrition.

(b) The end of glorifying God, through use of His Spirit in maintaining the consciousness of His presence, and so the end of sanctifying and transforming (by restraining and disciplining) the whole life of thought and word and act and feeling—the life of every capacity—intellect, imagination, memory, will.

2. Troubles, crosses, worries, disappointments, reproaches, mistakes and cruelties (unconscious) of others, etc. "*Non sunt tibi scandala (offences) sed praelia (battles),*" says St. Cyprian, "*nec debilitent aut frangant Christiani fidem, sed potius ostendant, in colluctatione, virtutem.*" To be praised and flattered would be no battlefield or victory to those prone to love such fields; to be reproached and rebuked and misrepresented—anyhow—to be humbled—is a "praelium" in which victory must follow, if we accept the field.

3. God sometimes sends us sweetnesses for our good; more often (because more safely), what is bitter. St. Augustine puts it: "*Res prospera donum est consolantis, res autem adversa admonentis Dei.*" "I will thank the Lord for giving me warning" is a blessed test (when we have to bear a reproach) of whether we are using it aright.

4. The monk Cassian, speaking of trials in general, says they are sent to us in three ways—"triplici modo inferuntur."

(a) "Plerumque ob emendationem."

(b) "Nonnunquam ob merita delictorum."

(c) "Interdum ob merita delictorum."

Of course, often they come for all three purposes, especially for the last; to punish us for past sins, of which the traces still remain.

5. It were fearful to think what some of us might become if

we had no such instruments to discipline and correct us. St. Gregory says that "those who were *compelled* to come in to the supper of the great King" represent the souls who, had they not been *compelled* by the discipline of suffering, would never have come to Christ at all.

6. The brevity and afflictions and trials of life are the results of our sins which are always present to God; it must be good for us to have them, anyhow, recalled to our souls. "Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee and our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." The Vulgate renders it, "*Sæculum nostrum in illuminatione vultus Tui*;" as if our negligences and ignorances and sins were our life. We are never so likely to be contrite for those, as when we desire ourselves to see them as God sees them, and to take the rebukes of our fellows as a humiliation and punishment which we deserve.

The question, therefore, as concerning our own souls in the matter of any special humiliation, is, "What use have I made, or am I making, of it in the light of these six considerations?"

And 1. How as to imitating our dear Lord in it, and being glad to be called, in any way, to be like Him in bearing?

2. How as to thanking Him for it in the presence of the mystery of His Incarnation, of His joy in humiliation, His patience in suffering:—

(a) The mortification of my spirit (understanding) to faith;

(b) The mortification of my imagination, and memory, and fancy to hope;

(c) The mortification of my will, passions, emotions, fears, to love?

3. How about the contrition of which the penitent David is an example, saying, "I acknowledge my faults, and my sin is ever before me"—the past unforgiven sin, not in detail, but in general; it is *never* absent from me; it preserves my contrition and humility ever fresh, and makes me take punishment when it comes in this life as love.

VI. As regards my neighbour.

1. At the *worst* he cannot be worse than an enemy smiting

me, in hatred and malice and falsehood; and yet were he that, and were I, as Jesus, sinless, I must needs take his treatment gently and sweetly, and offer him my cheek to smite.

2. The question as to any special reproach is not whether the charge may not be exaggerated or unjust (all human judgments *are* unjust more or less), but whether (a) there be any failing at all of the kind with which I am charged in my life, heretofore or now, and (b) whether there be any room for me, in these several respects, to improve and become a more perfect character.

3. It is not good to dwell upon the disqualifications of others for correcting us, and upon the defects in their method of doing so; least of all upon the wrong which we may be tempted to think they have done us. Admitting that (1) I have need to be amended, and (2) that God overrules all instruments for the amendment of those who need it, why should I not gently submit myself to be corrected and take it for love?

4. Consider the plain language of the Holy Spirit, "Whoso loveth instruction, loveth knowledge, and he that hateth reproof is brutish" (Prov. xii. 1). "He that regardeth reproof shall be honoured" (Prov. xiii. 18). "He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue" (Prov. xxviii. 23). "Open rebuke is better than secret love," "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (Prov. xxvii. 5, 6. Compare with Gal. iv. 16).

5. (a) I have to manifest the "free spirit" (Ps. li. 12), *i.e.* the spirit of love.

The presence of this spirit in me is one of the signs of *my own* predestination, which (if *it* be wanting) may, alas! be wanting also.

Why did St. Paul protest (Rom. viii. 38) that nothing *could* separate him from God? It was not from any revelation specially vouchsafed to that effect; for probably at that time, certainly the year before, he knew that he must chasten and mortify himself lest he should become a "castaway."

But he protested that nothing could separate him from Christ, because he knew that he *willed* nothing but His will. And this

will of St. Paul's was the spirit of love, which David calls "Thy free" or "principal" spirit—dominant spirit; spirit which governs the life, and delivers from the dominion of the flesh.

(b) This spirit is also the spirit of humility: if I would see others advanced in it I must myself descend; the gold-seekers and the pearl-fishers must go down into the depths of the earth and sea before they find treasure. Consider in this the example of Jesus.

(c) Evil is never to be overcome by evil, but by good (1 Thess. v. 15). What nothing else can accomplish, meekness, His "free spirit," can effect. Patience is the irresistible eloquence.

(d) No voice so powerful to win and persuade as the humiliation of saints; it is more than whole libraries of argument.

(e) Others may not have had my privileges and blessings; if they have much to throw off which hinders perfection, they have the more need of the gentle and sweet compulsion of example.

6. Love and meekness and joy and cheerfulness under all humiliation will bring me a double blessing.

It will diminish the pain of bodily and mental suffering,

While it will increase the good of it.

It cannot *give* offence, and

It will not take offence.

It will have its reward from God;

It will be most grateful to man.

A short paper on certain "Moral Considerations," recommended to those unsettled by the claims of the Church of Rome, may be useful to some minds, and also a few letters on this subject.

The whole controversy, as between *Catholic* truth (*Christianus mihi nomen, Catholicus cognomen*) and *Roman* Catholic argument is, of course, too deep and wide for ordinary persons. Therefore, sides are taken, for the most part, either *ignorantly* without full information; or *wilfully*, to please self, or some interest; or *blindly*, at the bidding of another.

*Moral Considerations.*

1. That our *personal* safety, even to eternal salvation, is not the whole end of religion, just as our own honour and glory are not the end of our being. The end of our being is to do and to suffer the will of God, and to honour Him.

2. That in times of trial and difficulty such as these, when, for the sins of *all*, the Christian Church is divided in the world, and visible unity is suspended, the true test of a Christian is patience under the cross, and endurance under that special form of the cross which the providence of God imposed upon us at our first call into His kingdom.

That the multitude of heresies and divisions in the Church of Christ *from the first*, caused the name of God to be blasphemed among Jews and Gentiles ; yet the faithful *never doubted*. See in the earliest apologies of the Fathers for Christianity how the *value* of heresies and divisions for testing truth is recognized.

That ignorance and wilfulness always were, and always will be, the chief causes of hastiness and impatience in times of religious trial.

3. That moral evil, in the form of division in religion, is not *stranger* than in the form of any *other* breach of God's commandments. God has nowhere promised any exception in favour of visible unity in religion from that law by which all other evils are permitted to try His elect. On the contrary, division in the Church is expressly provided for in His word. Therefore the true Catholic Church does not require a condition on earth in which there shall be no evil of division.

That the Church Catholic, from the apostles' days to these, has had, and continues to have, tares sown in it ; and these *cannot* be rooted up till the great harvest at the end of the world. As early as the end of the fourth century Epiphanius mentions no less than eighty distinct heresies prevalent in the Church, within so short a time from the Day of Pentecost. It is morally a crime, therefore, to say that men *must* root up each other, *because* they cannot wait till the great harvest day.

That it is wrong to say that the modern Church of Rome has "rooted up" the Catholic Church in England because she is divided (*i.e.* Rome herself *first* divided her, and *then* gave division as the cause for rooting her up). Because, if a Mahometan, or a Jew, or a heathen should argue against *Christianity* that it cannot be true, because of the divisions amongst its professors, the Church of Rome could not answer the argument.

That the charge of Rome, therefore, against England, on the score of division, if good for anything, is good against Christianity itself. Because in moral truth, what is incident to the whole Church of Christ can prove nothing against any one portion of it.

Churches still remained catholic in early times, even though full of heretics.

4. That the ground of attack on the Catholic Church of England is as untenable morally as certainly it is untenable historically; and therefore the whole ground is *assumed* instead of *proved*, and rests upon the enormous audacity of a claim, rather than upon the integrity and strength of an argument, or the authority of a revelation. For—

(a) What is that which makes a Church to be catholic and true, but its inherited rightful commission to minister the sacraments, received from Christ, and its inherited reception of the universal creeds? But the Church of Rome cannot deny our inherited commissions, because it came to us from themselves; and if *we* have not got it, neither have *they*. Nor can they deny our reception of the unmutated creeds; for we have them, and use them, more perfectly than themselves.

(b) What is the moral value of the charge of separation? It is true we are separated, but who and what separated us? Separation may be an argument for, as well as against, a Church. Unity is not necessarily truth. If so, then it would follow that Aaron, at the head of the united congregations of Israel, worshipping the golden calf, *must* have been the true Church of the Jews. Indeed, morally, there is more probability that the concurrence of all Roman Catholics (if it were so) in the modern position of

Popery is a strong argument *against* it, than the contrary ; because it may go to prove that it is only a conspiracy, an overgrown schism from the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, since there are various causes of union besides truth (indeed truth generally causes division) which notoriously work in Rome—ignorance, compulsion, and fear. And equally important is it to note what are the causes of division, and how bound up with man's natural corruptions—

Utter ignorance of Holy Scripture.

Curiosity and audacity.

Ambition and vanity.

Covetousness.

Contention and strife.

It is absurd to pretend that these moral evils are to be got rid of by a hard and fast theory of papal supremacy, and an iron law of extermination by authority. They may be lessened or aggravated, but they cannot be expelled, until human nature has passed beyond its field of probation in the flesh, and entered upon its promised perfection in heaven.

5. The sum of these moral considerations, in the presence of the charge of division brought against us by Rome, is this :—

The more trial, the more reward to faith and patience, in the place of trial into which we are called, *from the first*.

As to union, there is more successful combination among men for evil than there is for good. Lucifer's army has the strength of union more visibly than Michael's. There never were three or four pretenders to Lucifer's throne. He always has held, and still holds it undisputed. Unity, in *visible* strength, therefore, will never pass muster as a good argument for the *Catholic* Church, whatever Rome may claim for the *Roman* Church.

But if (for argument) it should be granted that unity is a good and sufficient evidence for truth, *we have* more of it in the English Church than the Romans in theirs.

More of it, *actually* ; because we recognize, in the world of East and West, in all the ancient seats of the early faith, in the Churches of Asia and Africa, as well as among our neighbours the

Churches of Rome and Italy and Gaul and Spain—we recognize heartily the truth which is common to all, and we extend to them the hand of Christian fellowship and love; whereas Rome does nothing but anathematize, if she has not obtained full and absolute *subjection* in all things to herself. More of it actually—because, if the truth were known, there are no such *vital* differences touching the soul of Christianity among our too candid and outspoken English countrymen, as are now to be found eating away the spiritual life of Italians and Frenchmen and Spaniards, with all the more voracity because well concealed beneath the veil of outward conformity.

And there is more *potential* unity among us than in Rome, because, as it was said years ago, so may it be said still—the doctrine of the papal supremacy, developed recently into a dogma of the Faith, necessary to salvation, and culminating in the Pope's personal infallibility, is *the seed of division in her bowels*. This doctrine has caused endless feuds and factions in times past, and it must and will cause them, till God shall take it out of the way.

To —.

. . . At last I have a few minutes free in which to send you my message of love and blessing for Easter, and to give you a short word of counsel in the difficulty in which you are placed with respect to the faithful but wayward —. In one word, my advice is to let her go from your household, and the sooner the better. Hers is a case of *will*; cases of will are unapproachable by argument, even where there is capacity to measure the value of historical and theological facts. But where there is less capacity of intelligence there is the more strength of will.

The position which she wants you to recognize, of communion in things sacred, indifferently, in Roman and English Churches in England, is an impossible position. The Romans have made it impossible; because *they* have excommunicated us, and made the terms of communion such that we must deny *facts*



as plain as that Pope Honorius was condemned (about as plain as that Charles I. was beheaded), before we can accept them.

We are the descendants of the "Catholics" who in the first ten years of Elizabeth made no difficulty whatever in conforming to the "Reformed worship." In *those* days the wished-for position was possible. English and Roman Catholics were merged in one—in "Catholic." But when the Pope excommunicated all who would not accept his unlawful terms—terms rendered more unlawful than ever since the modern Vatican Council—the position of the *Romans* in England was lost.

To —.

. . . I have just got home from London to find a host of letters in arrears to be answered. . . . What *can* you do, of course, but receive the Blessed Sacrament at Mr. —'s hands, closing your eyes to *him* and to his ways, and stretching out only to your Lord and Saviour, whom he cannot possibly hinder you from receiving.

It is all very sad, no doubt, and a tremendous trial ; but, thank God, His sacraments do not depend for their vitality and efficacy upon the qualities personally inherent or wanting in their administrators. The efficacy of the sacraments depends *solely* upon Christ's appointment. If Mr. R—— be a truly ordained priest, exercising his ministry lawfully, his own want of faith or holiness or reverence may and must affect *his own* soul in the effect of his ministrations of Divine things ; but if he were as wicked as Hophni and Phineas, or as holy as Samuel, he *could* not affect the Divine things themselves, or hinder the end for which God ordained them. If it were otherwise, how fearful it would be never to feel sure that *anywhere* one was receiving a valid sacrament—for so it would be of necessity, if one's benefit depended upon the faith or the life of the administrator, of which, of course, no human judgment could be certain and secure. Go, therefore, by all means : and do not look at the altar, or at Mr. R—— ; close your eyes to everything *outward*, and fix them

upon your crucified Lord, and see none but Him and Him alone.  
 . . . May God ever bless you and yours.

To —.

I am very much grieved for you, and earnestly pray God you may be delivered from the assaults of the spirit of envy, so that the soul which he seeks to hurt may be freed. But know this—the *nature* of envy as a deadly sin: it is deliberate grief at the good which another enjoys, as if that good lessened your own. And it is “deadly,” because it kills love, which rejoices in the “good” of another, because every “good” in others glorifies God. Envy wishes the “good” away, and grieves because it is present. The deadliness of this sin arises out of its tendency to *counteract* the Holy Spirit and the grace of our loving Lord. And the children which it begets are children of death; e.g. (1) Hatred, (2) Detraction, (3) Joy in another’s loss, (4) The arresting of friendship between souls.

When you have well considered what envy really is, I am persuaded you will know that you have not really *yielded* to it, though you may have run too near to it. It is therefore that I am anxious to protect you against it and against yourself. I. If another’s good is to your harm, for example, it is not envy, but fear, to wish that “good” away. II. If another has a “good” which is wanting to you, and that you only so desire to have that “good” as that it shall, in no sense, be *lessened* to that other, it is not “envy,” but jealousy. . . . III. If another has a good for which you are sorry because that other is unworthy of it or makes a bad use of it, it is not “envy,” but indignation, which is not a sin, unless it accuse God and His merciful providence to man. Envy is “invidia,” from “invidus,” a person who does not see. You do not see another’s “good” without sorrow on account of that “good.” You grieve that another, who is your equal, or not much above you or below you, should have an excellence which gives him or her a superiority, and you grieve because you take that as an evil to yourself.

I am inclined to think that you have been tempted to something like this, though, I trust, not deliberately to *will* this—that you have had the “*sensus*” of this horrible sin, but not “*consensus*,” and it is a maxim, “*non nocet sensus, ubi deest consensus.*” I am persuaded that you hate the sin, so far as you *see* its attack upon yourself, that you contend and fight and struggle with it; that you are not quiescent under its onslaught, but that you *contest* its power over you. Continue to wrestle with it and do not fear. The Kingdom suffereth violence, and the violent *take it by force*; this is true, in great things and small, of the daily inner life of those whom God loves. And remember, that in actual conflict there is neither victory nor defeat for long, though in the end there will be one or the other. I take it that, in your present case, you have been alarmed at the consciousness of the enemy's presence, and have taken conflict for defeat. Continue to fight, and to fight with more zeal, and with arms sharpened anew in the furnace of love, through persevering prayer; and all will be well.

It was about this time that Retreats for the laity as well as clergy were becoming general; and Mr. Skinner took an active part in their revival. He writes on this subject:

Do not be anxious about the Retreat. God has charge of it all; and you have nothing really to do except to surrender yourself to Him and it to Him, to be dealt with as He shall will. He shall be kept in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him: the *end* of a Retreat is to be more stayed on Him. Begin it, therefore, with a resolute purpose to let go every other care, trouble, anxiety, fear, but the one anxiety—to have no thought but Him.

My earnest advice to you is to let it prove itself, and to abstain, wholly, from any forecastings or prejudgments concerning it or its conductor. It is of the essence of any good outcome from a Retreat, that you should believe in the Blessed Spirit—before it, in it, and after it—as the sole Mover of all good and blessing; and just in the measure in which you are taken up with the human instruments employed, do you mar the simplicity of this

act of faith, and deprive yourself of your full reward : so think no more of *anything* about the Retreat, except the absolute surrender of it all, in faith and trust, to God the Holy Ghost.

As to the meditation, week by week, resolved on in Retreat, of course if you find it *altogether* a failure, you must give it up, and substitute something else. The usual discipline of Retreats implies the continuance of the whole resolution, from the time at which it was taken, on to the time of the next Retreat, at which another will be taken to supply its place. And the *rationale* of this is, I think, obvious :—that, the end of a Retreat being the perfection of the soul's life, the elements which go to make up perseverance in the direction of that end cannot, without loss, be neglected. The resolution is a leading element. If one fails to persevere in even the resolution, how shall one ever reach the end ?

However, it would, I think, be an error to substitute the technical form for the spiritual and living thing, and I am of opinion that if you fail to strike sparks of fire out of one form, you must try another. You cannot anyhow be the same since the Retreat that you were before it ; all that you received and gave, then and there, make the difference, and probably nothing will better sum up that difference, or at least commemorate it, than the resolution and meditation which you promised to make.

And now as to your resolution. I think you ought to go on making it till it has passed into your life. Of course, this is the end of making it ; and if you stop short of the end, of what use making it ? It is not like a penance, given in a penal as well as a remedial sense, with a defined limit. It is an inspired purpose which is never satisfied till it is fulfilled. Not that you will, certainly, be able to know at any time that you have fully accomplished it ; but that your mind and intention and will to accomplish it can never cease. So your resolution will pass into your life of daily or hourly prayer, and will become as much part of yourself as your daily confession or oblation or thanksgiving or intercession.

As to the precise form of meditation, I am not in a condition to speak clearly, because I did not hear the key to it. But, if I do not mistake, I take that to be of comparatively little importance. You can change the *form* of meditation after a month or two, or indeed have no special form at all ; but to the substance, to the *thing*, in order to which you have dedicated yourself afresh, you must adhere steadfastly, and all the more because it came to you in the course of the Retreat, as direct from God the Holy Ghost Himself. I enclose a prayer which will perhaps be a help to you in shaping this fresh and most important act of devotion.

*Prayer to be said daily by memory.*

I bless and praise and thank Thee, O my God, for Thy Mercy to me in my Retreat ; and now I beseech Thee,

To grant me pardon of all my sins, perfect contrition, and life-long repentance ;

To protect me from myself, lest, after so much grace received, I fall back again into my old and too familiar ways, and so add sin to sin ;

Above all, to strengthen, by Thy grace, every effort which I make to subdue my flesh, to restrain my tongue, to mortify my pride and vanity, and to *fix* my conscience on Thee, as the One End of all I think, and say, and do.

Finally, O Blessed Lord, I beseech Thee to pour down upon me such grace as may not only cleanse this life of mine, but beautify it a little, if it be Thy Will,—before I go hence and am no more seen. Grant me—

Think of the Nine Orders of Angels, encouraging and assisting.	{	The loving Fear of Thy most holy Name ;
		The Hope that never can be too brave ;
		The Humility that never can be too deep ;
		The Patience that never can be too long ;
		The Discretion that never can be too wise ;
		The Poverty of Spirit that never can be too meek ;
		The Obedience that never can be too perfect ;
		The Courage that never can be too enduring ;
		The Diligence that can never be too exact.

To these add, O my God, the grace which is greater than all—that I may love Thee with all my heart and soul and mind and strength, and my neighbour as myself—and that I may persevere unto the end ; and all, for the sake, and through the merits, of Jesus Christ our Lord, who ever liveth, etc. Amen.

And here I must urgently entreat you to be more watchful against that tendency to "*forget*" a duty which so very often wounds and mars one's warm and hopeful expectations for you. It is not that you forget some ordinary thing, or even some auxiliary things. That anybody might do through infirmity, and be only a little the worse. But you forget some substantial and special direction to meet some special need ; and this cannot be without great loss and harm. I know that this forgetting is not wilful, and that God, in His love, will bear with you ; but it indicates great remissness of thought and memory in the things which most concern you ; and you cannot continue in such remissness without loss.

Now say once more, *Nunc cæpi* ; and may the blessed God keep you from falling, and make you to grow more and more in the love of His service and the obedience to His commandments.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### BEREAVEMENT.

1866-1868.

"Tra bella e buona  
Non so qual più fosse."

THE "sterner sound" calling to sorrow and trial of which the Vicar of Newland had thought in his brightest days came first in the comparatively early death of the beloved and most loving brother who, from the time he became a widower, had made his home with his brother James.\* He had property in Guatemala, and in December, 1866, crossed the Atlantic for the thirty-ninth time, intending to wind up his affairs in South America, and spend the rest of his days in peace at home. His last letter was begun at a place called Paraiso (in English, "Paradise"), near Panama, where he had gone in search of the scarlet passion-flower, which had been

\* George Ure Skinner, F.L.S., was one of the most accomplished botanists of his day. He introduced into this country—discovered by himself in the wilds of Guatemala—some of our finest hothouse Orchidaceæ. Many are named after him—*Barkeria Skinneri*, *Cattleya Skinneri*, *Lycaste Skinneri*, and several others. Among the rarest and most beautiful of his discoveries is the *Odontoglossum grande*. Ornithology also owes much to Mr. Skinner. Not less than twenty species of birds were first sent over to England by him from Guatemala. Mr. Gould, in his beautiful work on "Humming-Birds," acknowledges again and again how much naturalists in this country owe to Mr. Skinner's discoveries.

long an object of desire. He found it, and described its beauty enthusiastically, ending his letter on the Epiphany at Aspinwall, where, he says, "I came to spend my Sunday, as I can get a Church service." Next day he was a little unwell, and on the 9th he was at rest, dying of yellow fever. The loss of this most dear brother and father brought a heavy shadow over the bright life at Newland, and no one suffered more from it than Mr. Skinner. Writing to a friend of his brother, he says—

His heart was always with God. He lived a watchful life, in continual readiness to die. It is remarkable, especially to those who love him, how his heart seemed to be won and possessed by that "scarlet passion-flower" in the latter days of his earnest diligent life, and how the Epiphany was foremost in his mind when he returned to the place where death was lurking for him.

The sudden blow and deep sorrow told severely on Mr. Skinner's health, and early in March he went to Torquay for a little change and rest. He did not return much better, but fought against his weakness, and on Good Friday gave, for the first time, the Three Hours' Meditation on the Passion. Before another Lent came round he was to know, by deep experience, the bitterness and sweetness of the cross, and to teach by example as well as word. For this was the last year on earth of his only child.

In a letter written at this time, April, 1867, just after her last Easter on earth, she says—

The Easter services have been very joyous and beautiful. All has been as it should, and everything "went well," as we say. The church looks most lovely. Really the chancel is unequalled in beauty. Mrs. P—— presented the church on Easter Eve with the most lovely processional cross, which I will not attempt to describe, but which I trust you will soon see.



We finished our work on Easter Eve just in time to get a hurried cup of tea before service; and then in a state of excitement entered the church. Can't you exactly imagine the feelings one experiences when waiting for the service to begin on Easter Eve—the thrilling breathless joy, the almost nervous excitement, the listening for the bell to stop, the thought that Easter is *come* bounding back on one every moment? Oh, I am sure that Easter joy is that joy which no man taketh from you; I never felt it so really as I did this year. Well, the bell stopped, and then came the joyous shout of triumph, "Jesus Christ is risen to-day, Alleluia!" and down came the procession headed by the lovely cross, appearing high above the heads of the people, gleaming in the light—the symbol of victory—victory over death and sin. Oh, how glorious the hymn sounded, and how I *shouted* it till my voice seemed choked with an almost strange gladness! . . . When the choir were in their places, the cross was put by papa in a little place made to receive it. That Eve service was almost too beautiful, if such a thing could be! The whole of the music was glorious, and papa preached; and then while the alms were collected we had "The strain upraise," which was shouted, and the organ pealed out in it famously, and, to crown all, we had "O Paradise!" as a recessional. There's no time like Easter in *this* world; and think of that Easter which is to come!

The church looked fresh and quiet and lovely at the early service on Easter Day itself. We had very many communicants, the number during the day being one hundred and thirty-six. It has been a very happy Easter, not like any other—not like last year, but still very happy; and, miss *him* as we did, how could we wish him back to us, when his Easter must have been tenfold more glorious. But Easter brings us very near those blessed ones, and our joy is their joy.

She had grown up a tall, fair maiden, and had she lived, her uncommon gifts, both of nature and grace, must have made her remarkable. It belongs to the story of her father's life to tell something of the jewel which he lost,

and, as we faithfully believe, has found again. She who has allowed the following sketch to be printed wishes us to remember that it was written in the first instance (by a most intimate companion) only "to meet the eyes that had dwelt lovingly on that pure young face, with the rose-bud colour, flushing and fading at every passing emotion, the 'partridge eye,' and the bonny brown hair—all the gracious charms of that brief, early girlhood."

St. Barnabas', Pimlico, was Agnes' first English home ; there she sang the Psalter in church without difficulty at four years old. Before service began, she used to put her Bible into her mother's hand, and whisper, "Find me about the virgins, mamma" (St. Matt. xxv.) ; then sit quietly reading her favourite parable till the clergy came in. "Hush ! the angels are here," she said, holding up her little finger, when her father carried her, just three years old, into church. It seems to me that there is real poetical feeling in this little rhyme, made up entirely by herself when four or five :—

"Sing, sing, sing,  
Christmas is coming !  
Cheer, cheer, cheer,  
Christmas now is here !  
Sigh, sigh, sigh,  
Christmas is gone by !"

At ten years old she began to give herself rules for keeping Lent, and in this she persevered to the end. After her death her mother found these first rules written out, with a table annexed to show how they had been kept, and each year she added to them. "We used to have such beautiful

talks together," she said to me when dying, speaking of her mother. "You can't think how she talks of these things, and I never could rest till I had told her *everything*." Her devoted affection for both her parents was marked by the sensitive enthusiasm which she possessed. How excited she became one day, when quite a child, during a discussion in the schoolroom about martyrdom, and afterwards about what would be the easiest death to die. "Oh," she exclaimed, "but a martyr would not choose the easiest death."

Some points in her character did not come out forcibly until after her confirmation, to which she had eagerly looked forward long before, always having an earnest desire to become a communicant. She was entirely a playful, merry child at the time she was confirmed ; after that her character seemed to develop very rapidly, though she very seldom gave expression to her deepest thoughts and aspirations. Those thoughts were ever how she could become more like her Lord. She writes to one intimate friend and companion after her confirmation :

I wish I were as good as you. It is very hard to be good, but I do think it is easier now that I am confirmed. I have thought of a new plan to help me to be good which I will tell you. I write down every evening when I go to bed each wrong thing I do in the day, and pray God to forgive me them, and at the end of the month I shall compare them with the last month's paper, and by that see how far I am improved and how far gone back. Also the other day I made some resolutions, and wrote them down on paper, and these I read over every morning and evening, and try to keep them as I would rules ; and pray daily to God to help me keep them, and if I have broken any I write it down with the other wrong things I have done in the day. It

would be very nice if you, dear —, would do the same, for we should be so much more together in the spirit. . . . One is so apt (at least I am) to be puffed up if one improves in the least, instead of giving the glory to God. Suppose I were to die suddenly, as K. G——did—where should I go to? I long to be able to answer without doubt and with real *truth*: Heaven. Oh, may God have mercy upon me, and bring me to the haven where I would be! Rest! what a happy thought! No more trials, no more temptations, no more sin; at rest, and at rest with Jesus. And there will be no more partings there, no more sorrow. May God bless and keep us both, and bring us to that other world to live with Him for ever. You don't know how much I wish for your prayers; they will do me good. Pray for me that my sins may be forgiven. Promise me that you will always pray this.

She persevered in her "plan," begun at fourteen, to the very last day that she had strength for it, about a month before her death. She writes at this time of

the blessing of weekly communion, of lovely services, of the *always* open church, always ready to receive us, to "rest awhile." It seems like going to Jesus. There are two verses in the "Christian Year" that seem written expressly for me:

"Mortal, if life smile on thee, and thou find  
All to thy mind,  
Think, who did once from heaven to hell descend,  
Thee to befriend:  
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,  
Thy rest, thine all."

Writing in the same strain, she says in another letter—

I think of you always in my prayers and in church. Prayer brings us very close together. Will you, dear —, say a little prayer for me every day at 9.30? And so will I for you when I go into church. What should we be if we might not pray? Pray always! We *can* pray always; and as well as bringing us

near to God, it seems to bring us near each other, for our prayers ascend *together* to heaven and meet before the throne of God.

Here is another bit from one of her childish letters :

And then there was the stroll home alone ; the half-dreamy feeling of fatigue and happiness ; the sitting down under a hedge in the shade to rest ; the quiet solitude and stillness ; the lovely, lovely *everything* around ! Of course I was happy. Can you doubt it ? And now I am sitting in the schoolroom ; the outer blind down ; Dickie hanging in the open window ; the blue sky ; the trees all just the same. Well, it's a world ! A new and original remark ! What *sort* of a world ? To-day a pleasant one ; to-morrow just the contrary. And yet really the world itself is just the same every day. It's only the complaining, grumbling, ungrateful inhabitants who fancy it different. The real difference being in their ever-changing, ever-discontented selves.

I can't realize that I am going home (she writes at the end of a pleasant round of visits). It is too delightful ! "The day *after* the day after to-morrow !" I can say *that* now. And to-morrow I can say, "The day after to-morrow," and the next day, "To-morrow," and the next day, "To-day." Fancy being able to say, "This evening I shall be home !" Oh, fancy it ! How exquisite the dear church will seem ! How pretty the little boys will look ; how familiar the dear old blue cloaks ! And how *lovely* it will be, sitting and standing and kneeling between you and mamma on Friday evening at 7.30, at HOME again !

And again, later on, when away from home :

How I long to be at home, especially on Sundays. Dear lovely Newland, and dearest, loveliest St. Leonard's ! I can fancy how beautiful it looks. The more I go to other places and to other churches, the more I feel there *is* no church so perfect in its way as our church at home. It almost makes me frightened to think how much we have to answer for ; I wonder if great privileges do one as much good as they do harm ; I am sure

sometimes they seem to do harm. One is apt to think lightly of them, and to get careless. And then it frightens me to think of the awful responsibility that rests upon us, especially *we* who have hardly known what it is to be without the weekly celebration since we were confirmed. O, how often have I been told that after my confirmation I should have far greater temptations, and also far greater grace to resist them; and how true it is! I know and feel what a great help all our privileges are, and I know, too, how little we should be without them. It is not ourselves; it is God who helps us and makes us resist temptations, and without Him we would be nothing.

On Easter Day, 1866, she wrote :

Certainly the church looks *perfect*. I don't think it ever looked so well; but as we say that every time, perhaps you will not believe it. But to begin at the beginning. You can fancy with what excited feelings I woke on Saturday morning, and the sobering effect my entrance into church had upon me—the sad plain service and the black altar-hangings showing that Easter had not come yet. Then there was the quiet eleven o'clock service, and one of papa's *resting* sermons; and after that, *work*.

She describes the flowers and decorations at loving length, dwelling especially on her own peculiar work, the font decorations :

I was enchanted with the effect of it when finished, and, of course, claimed admiration from all in turn. Can't you fancy it? Mamma's quick little nod, and "Very nice!" K——'s half-criticizing praise and grave, quiet looks; M——'s suggestions and very moderate "Yes." O, how exquisite the service was! And the processional hymn was perfect. The choir did not come in at the north door, so the voices kept in tune with the organ, and they did sing splendidly—those high notes ringing out and coming nearer and nearer. I felt overcome, and half cried with excitement. And we heard "The strain upraise" most joyfully sung, and after the sermon, "Sing we Alleluia," and then the blessing.

Very tired, of course, we were when we at last assembled for supper. I was quite *lame* with fatigue, but went soon to bed, feeling very happy, of course, though dead tired. And then the next morning—the lovely quiet early service, and the church looking heavenly in the early morning light! All that you must fancy for yourself. It was a lovely morning, bright sun, and Easter joy pervading everywhere.

Her mother writes of her at this time (1867):

She was not in strong health when we received the tidings of her dear uncle's death. Next to her own parents, she loved him most on earth, and her own sorrow and that of her sister-cousins seemed to be more than her tender heart could bear. I date her illness now from that event, although at the time we did not feel in the least alarmed at her state. In June I took her to Clevedon for a change, hoping that sea air might strengthen her. At the same time her father went for a rest and holiday with his brother Charles to Paris. Both returned home the better, and as the doctor who saw my dear child at Bristol assured us there was no cause for alarm in her case, I had every hope that she would soon be quite restored.

In August James and I and the three girls went abroad. We were six weeks on the Continent. This little tour had been recommended as the best thing for dear Aggie, and good for her father and the other girls. But I doubt now if it *was* a wise thing. The darling often got knocked up, though we did everything to prevent that. She was *very* poorly when we returned to Newland the first week in October. But she rallied considerably soon after her return, though after a little time she fell back again.

Once, when eleven years old, she drew on her slate a little tombstone, and in, as it were, a fit of abstraction put her name on it, and added the date 1868. She says when about fifteen:

I always had a presentiment when quite a child that I should not live to be twenty. If I do die young, I trust I shall be ready.

Don't think I wish to die, sometimes the thought is very terrible to me. And don't think that I fancy I am going to die; for, humanly speaking, I don't think there is a chance of that at present. It would be almost beautiful to think of dying *here*, and being buried *here*. O, dearest —, pray for me, lest the *fear* of death fall upon me. I think perhaps that sickness will be my trial in life, for everything is so happy. And *then* I can't be unhappy, because "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," and I have had no sorrows yet. But it is all in God's hands, not in mine; His will be done. God will give me strength to bear whatever it may be His will to send me, be it illness, death, or service. . . . You will care if I die, I know. But you must not grieve too much: it is only for a very little time, and then no parting, no tears; all joy and happiness together, and with Jesus.

During Lent, 1867, her last, she wrote:

We have been having the hymn, "Christian, dost thou see them," pretty often lately. We sang it this morning; I grow fonder of it every day, I think. I *am* so glad when the fourth of the miscellaneous hymns is given out. Then I shut my book, put my hands into my muff, and face the window, so as to turn away from every one and prepare to enjoy it. And they sing it as if they really enter into it. "Christian, answer boldly," etc. And I like the *Gloria* at the end, for it seems like thanking God for those lovely comforting words in the last verse. Don't you think so? You see, I am very full of hymns just now. I hope we shall have "Christian" very often next week, and then it won't come again for a year.

She was in good health and remarkable for her fresh and joyous spirits when she wrote this, but the subject of death seemed present to her mind in her happiest and most light-hearted days. It was soon after Easter, 1867, that Agnes was taken ill; she had not previously appeared out of health. Her strength seemed quite suddenly to give



way. One morning (May 17), when at her prayers, she was seized with faintness. She was laid upon her bed, and it was several days before she left it; this was certainly the beginning of the end; for, although she appeared entirely to rally from the attack, she never was the same afterwards, either in health of body or elasticity of spirits.

Her letters in 1867 are seldom as bright as her former ones. They are often much shorter, and contain little allusions to the failing state of her health. Once she complains that her voice gets weak; she becomes exhausted trying to sing in church, and expresses an unusual wish for her—"I wish I were going to the seaside to pick up my strength a little. I long to go away."

In a letter from Clevedon, where her mother had taken her in June, 1867, she says—

The sunsets here are so wonderfully beautiful. I never saw anything like them, I am writing at the window, and as I look up I see such a lovely sight, I wish I had your pen to describe it. The sun just peeping out between some dark clouds, and the red light over the sky, and the golden glimmer on the blue sea. It is not sunset yet, but the clouds are getting ready to receive the sun. The sunset here makes me think of heaven; it does look as if heaven were behind those clouds, and we were just allowed to have a sort of reflection of the light and glory there. And the golden path on the waters getting brighter and brighter as it gets near the light, seems like that narrow path we have to tread, with the water around us and beneath us, into which one might so easily fall. I love the sunset and the thoughts it brings. Only then the sun sets, and the light grows dimmer, and night comes on, and it seems all over, and heaven shut out. But of course it is there all the same, though we cannot see it. I am sorry when the red clouds get dark and black, and the little golden windows (the windows of heaven) fade away.

In this letter she also alludes to some thoughts of special awe which come across her mind at the word "eternity," or "for ever and ever," and also speaks of her death, saying "it may be near."

In the beginning of August, 1867, she writes that she is going abroad with her parents and cousins—a thing she had often longed to do ; but now she dreads the journey, and fears she will be knocked up. "I am beginning to regret leaving the church and everything here for so long," she writes. "I wonder if we shall ever come back?"

No one, however, but the friend to whom she wrote these letters, was aware of these occasional feelings of depression and disinclination for the exertion of travelling. That they were but occasional is certain, as she was frequently enthusiastic in her expressions of pleasure at the anticipation of visiting Switzerland and the places of interest which it was proposed to take *en route*. And that she was able to enjoy these seven weeks on the Continent is shown by the diary she kept during the time.

When she first returned home her health seemed much improved, and she often spoke of the delight of "feeling well again." Upon the return of this short-lived strength she became very anxious to get out of invalid habits—"self-indulgent," she called them ; and she made out a little table for the profitable employment of her time, assigning something to every hour in the day. She recommenced studying Latin, and began translating the Psalms into Latin.

Her health began to fail again about the middle of November. She then writes sadly at being obliged to give up going to the early service, and at again having to "nurse and take care of herself." In one letter she says—

Dr. — has given me leave to go to church next Friday, so I am very happy on that score. I mean to rest all the morning of St. Andrew's Day, and so be able to go to the Confirmation, which will be in the afternoon. And then on Sunday I am going to the Celebration, so you see I have quite a feast of services before me. It seems so long since I went to church; I hope it won't knock me up, but I mean to keep quite quiet till Friday.

These days of weakness seemed long and wearisome to her sometimes, and once she touchingly complains, "I am afraid of wishing the time away; that is so wrong." The depression arising from weakness troubled her too. About Christmas time she was brighter, and was very anxious to assist in the church decorations. Some easy work was brought to her sofa, and she got quite cheerful and happy over it; but even then she missed the elastic spring of her old spirits, and "wondered she could not feel so *glad* of anything as she used to be." There was a strange intense thoughtfulness in the expression of her face about this time; her eyes had a peculiar look, as if gazing at something far off. She occasionally talked much of those dear to her who were resting in Paradise: "O for one word with them!" she once said, "the silence is too intense."

But at times she was quite bright and like herself again, and so late as the 2nd of January, 1868, she took part, at her own desire, in a concert given to the poor people, played beautifully, and went about among them, as bright and as interested in all that was going on as ever. She was a great favourite among the old pensioners, and often have they since alluded to that evening she spent amongst them, just five short weeks before she was taken away.

Her father wrote, on January 14, to a friend at whose marriage he had promised to officiate:

I hope nothing may come in the way of my getting to Fritten-den on the 21st or the 22nd, but I am in great anxiety about my child. Dr. — has seen her and pronounced her lungs far gone in destruction ; one nearly gone, and the other following, and all embarrassed by utter disorder in the digestive organs. All this is extremely grave, and I know not what to hope for. I do, most heartily and fully, resign her and myself to God's will. But she is my only one, and very dear. Yet, what of that, —, if there be the eternal union in Him to live on already, and to long for and rejoice in hereafter? You will not forget us in your prayers.

To the same friend he wrote on the 28th :

Alas! alas! my dear Sidney, my darling continues to be in extreme danger, and though God can do all things, and even restore her to me in this life, yet I feel a strong conviction that I am now under the chastening trial of preparing to lose this sweet light of my eyes out of sight. My dear wife was most considerate, and did nothing to alarm me when at Frittenden, though I could not but be anxious enough. But I returned to find the precious invalid entirely confined to bed, and in a raging fever, which must, if it had continued, have cut her off in the course of Sunday. She is a little bit better to-day, but nothing to speak of or build on ; rather the negative state of "not worse," than anything in advance. Pray for us.

It was the 9th of January, the anniversary of her dear uncle's death, that Agnes went to her beloved church for the last time. She then received the blessed Sacrament. After that she became rapidly weaker. On the 20th of January she came downstairs for the last time, and after the 23rd was entirely confined to bed. On the 21st (St. Agnes' Day) she remembered the date, and tried to persuade her mother to leave her and go to church "because it was St. Agnes' Day."

It was on the 20th that her father spoke to her of the

dangerous nature of her illness, and told her that the chances were against her recovery. When he broke this to her, she seemed much agitated, and spoke of "not wishing to die yet." "This world," she said, "is real to me; the other is such a mystery, so unreal." Soon afterwards, when her mother told her that her father was coming to sit with her, she said in an anxious, nervous way, "Ask him not to speak to me of *that* again; it makes my heart thump." And when speaking to her cousin the same day she appeared agitated, and said with tears, "Papa thinks I shall not get well again." The next day her father had a Celebration for her, and it was remarkable that from that time it never again appeared trying to her to have the prospect of her death alluded to. She now asked her father to write to Ditchingham and ask for the prayers of the Church.

During the night of the 28th of January, she spoke to her mother (who was keeping watch alone with her) of many little matters which were on her mind. She thought of her little pet God-child, Ada, and she begged her mother not to forget her; she seemed to try that night to remember all she wished to say to her mother, and then asked her to read the ninety-first psalm.

The following night she said to one of her attendants in a very calm, quiet way, "You know that perhaps I shall die," or words to that effect. And upon being asked whether she would rather die or live, she said unhesitatingly that she would rather live, adding, "Is that wrong?" But in a very short time (in answer, no doubt, to prayer) a complete change came over her feelings in this respect. She spoke frequently to her father of the prospect of her death, and constantly expressed a hope that "she should

not be afraid." "Ask everybody," she said, "to pray that I may not be afraid." Another doctor was called in, and on her mother telling her that it was not because they thought he could make her well again, she fervently exclaimed, "Oh, I hope not ; I trust not. I long to go !"

On the 30th the Holy Communion was offered for her in church. In the afternoon of that day the little choir-boys, at her father's suggestion, and her own joyful acquiescence, came into the house to sing her favourite hymns for her, standing in the hall downstairs, where she might hear them without effort. She had previously made her own selection from the hymn-book used in her dear church. "Those eternal bowers ;" "Jesu, the Virgins' Crown art Thou ;" "Nearer, my God, to Thee ;" "Christian, dost thou see them ;" "Jerusalem the golden."

During the day, at intervals, she mentioned several little things she would wish to be done "after she was gone." She begged one of her sister-cousins to become an associate of Ditchingham in her place. "Take the money," she said ; "you will work better than I have." To this same cousin she said, "Be a daughter to mamma. Poor little mother !" She was asked whether she wished to have her pocket-money sent to Ditchingham. "Oh no," she answered readily ; "I have fixed about that ; there is sure to be a Celebration at my funeral ; I should like all you find to be put into the offertory."

Each morning from the 31st of January to the last, there was a private Celebration for her. When she became too weak to bear it in her room, it was held in the adjoining one, and the blessed Sacrament brought to her. And who, among the privileged two or three who knelt by the dying

saint's side to receive with her the Bread of Life, can ever forget that ardent, longing look, as from time to time she opened her languid eyes and gazed towards the door, feeling the moment approaching for her Lord and Saviour to be brought to her?

During these last few days her cough had been very racking and constant, and she suffered much. But her mind was always perfectly clear and peaceful, and she seemed ever to be thinking of her place of rest. "I wonder what language they speak in Paradise?" she once said. "Oh, how lovely it will be!"

Her sick-room was a haven of patient expectation. She was so calm and peaceful that her quietness communicated itself to all around. Her beautiful eyes shone with a light that was not of this earth; in spite of weariness and weakness, her face, as her father one day remarked, "seemed positively shining with grace." There was an atmosphere of quiet *waiting* in that room; no sign of confused distress; no stifling of a growing apprehension; no fear of uttering the great word *death*, which in too many cases add intensely to the trial and sorrow of such seasons. This was an indescribably tender and touching time—beautiful, unearthly; in many ways heart-breaking, and yet full of comfort. Each morning CHRIST was there, and afterwards we felt how truly *she* "had been with Jesus."

In former days a fond embrace, a tender, touching word, from those she deeply loved would move her at once to tears. But now, she saw her mother weep, heard her loving parting words, and only fixed upon her a calm, tender gaze, a sort of all-comprehending look, that seemed to penetrate to the very borders of the land "that is very far away."

"Dearest little mother, precious little mother!" she often said, and with inexpressible fondness; but it was with tearless eyes, and with none of the dread which had once haunted her of what that mother would suffer in losing her.

On the Feast of the Purification (the Sunday before her death) her father said to her that he was going into church when the bell rang for the high celebration. "I'm glad you are, darling," she replied. Then he told her he would pray all her prayers for her. "I know," he said, "all that is in your heart of hearts to ask for, and I will ask in your stead." "Thank you, darling," she said, "pray that I may have peace when the time comes." Towards the evening she revived a little, and one of her boy cousins was allowed to see her. He said to her, "I know you are happy, Aggie." She smiled one of the beautiful smiles that used to come slowly on her parched lips, and said, "Yes—at least, I hope so."

On Tuesday, the 4th, she slept a good deal, but several times woke herself trying to sing. Once, upon waking thus suddenly, she said (smiling as if amused at herself), "I can't sing *yet*. I thought I was singing 'Those eternal bowers.'" She was very suffering and weary towards the evening of this day, and pained with lying on one side, which was getting very sore; but it was the only position in which she could rest at all. She said to her father, "I thought it would not be so long; it is very long." He spoke to her of Job's experience, and of the patience of our Lord, and of His prayer. "Dear papa," she said, "how fortunate I am to have *you* and the others! God is very good to me. He gave me a good night last night."

That afternoon she thanked the servants for their kind-



ness, and wished to say "good-bye" to two of them. They took her hand respectfully, but she made an effort to raise herself to kiss them.

The next day—her last on earth—she was much exhausted, and could hardly keep from falling asleep during the Celebration ; later in the day she suffered much from cough and restlessness, and especially from pain caused by the soreness of lying on one side. But she tried to make light of it, and to be not only patient, but cheerful. "No matter," she said, as one after another tried to arrange her pillows and bed ; "I have made up my mind *not* to be comfortable." She asked for some flowers which one of her cousins had brought her the day before, and expressed great regret on finding they were withered : we remembered this, because that little bunch of spring flowers was the last earthly thing that gave her pleasure.

Towards the evening of this last day she seemed to revive somewhat, and the doctor who saw her about five o'clock pronounced her pulse and symptoms better than the day before ; the servants, therefore, and others who had shared the watching were this night sent to bed, and the child was left alone with her father and mother, who took it in turn to sit by her side. She did not sleep, and at times was very restless and suffering, but her mind perfectly clear and peaceful. "Will it be to-night ?" she once said to her mother. "Oh, how beautiful if it would come to-night !" This she said several times, interspersing such longing aspirations with caressing words to her mother. "Oh, I hope it won't be long," she again said ; "I am so restless." "You will soon be at rest, my darling," her mother replied.

During this night, in which she was left alone with her

father and mother, she seemed to feel herself taking leave of them, and asked them to forgive her all that she had done wrong to them. Hard indeed would it have been to say what there was to pardon !

But now the end was fast approaching. It was about half-past one on Thursday morning, February 6, that her parents saw the change in her, and the others accustomed to watch by her bedside were called up. "There was a cry made;" the Bridegroom was indeed coming to her whose lamp was so brightly burning to welcome Him. Yet it was with that sense of terror which she seems to have foreboded that she entered the shadowy valley of death.

It would not be well, even were it possible, to write down what passed at that most trying time ; when the dear sufferer, heedless of our presence, turned to her father as priest and absolver, to seek the comfort she had never sought in vain. The struggle was a short one ; not attended by bodily suffering : it was but that holy soul's last wrestling with the burdens of earth, and casting off all that fettered it as it passed "within the veil." Never, never shall we lose the sound of her sweet ringing voice calling in those last moments with supernatural strength upon the holy Name : "Jesus ! Jesus ! I cling to Thee ! save me, save me !" and at the last, "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me."

We would not, we cannot speak more of those moments. We can only pour out the thoughts that flow from those memories before Him who, in His everlasting love, permitted His child thus to drink of the cup He drank of.

It was over—the sweet eyes were closed, upon the

wearied face there dawned the smile of endless peace, the rest she had longed for was hers at last and for evermore. In her own little room, draped with white, and looking like a sanctuary with its sacred pictures and emblems, we watched all that was mortal of our dear one. A little altar (from which she had last received the Bread of angels) stood at the foot of the bed; and on it burned, night and day, two wax-lights. The whole room looked holy; and O, the lovely peace of that resting-face, and of the two fair hands across the breast, clasping her little cross. We knew, as we stood gazing on her form, that there *was* "the rest for ever, and the rapture, and the Hand that wipes all tears away."

A great calmness came over the bereaved household; all seemed as if listening to catch some sound from the far-off golden shore to which that happy soul had fled. Many asked to look upon her face once more. The school-children came, and many mothers also; little Ada, too, and other children; and the sun shone in through the closed curtains every day upon the snowdrops, violets, and other spring flowers, which many loving hands brought daily to add to the sacred beauty of that room.

The day of the funeral, Wednesday, February 12, was very bright and beautiful, and warm as May. Every part of the Office for the Burial of the Dead was so consistently rendered at St. Leonard's, that none of its comfort and beauty was lost. A cross in white metal, shining like silver, stretched nearly the whole length and breadth of the coffin, and round the edge were these words: "All that is mortal of Agnes Raymond Skinner; who fell asleep in Christ, Thursday, February 6, 1868, in the faith and fear

of God. Amen. Aged 18." The pall, of violet and white and red, was the same which, two years before, had covered the remains of the Rev. John Keble. The service was choral, and the psalms and hymns spoke of *her* to the hearts of the mourners as nothing else could.

As we followed to the grave, the choir sang the hundred and twentieth to the hundred and twenty-sixth Psalms, and by the side of the grave the Easter hymn, "Jesus lives," was sung. Then the mourners, each in turn, came forward and placed on the coffin an offering of flowers, until it was completely covered with white camellias, azalias, hyacinths, and snowdrops, and then it was lowered into the grave.

Although the burial-ground was crowded with persons, the perfect stillness was remarkable. Not a sound could be heard, after the final "Amen" of the service, but the singing of birds in the tree which overhangs the grave, rejoicing in the bright sunshine of that warm February day, seeming to thank God that "the winter was past, the rain over and gone."

We returned home through the garden where she used to play, and so into the quadrangle, the choir singing "Jerusalem the golden."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LITERARY WORK.

1868-1870.

“How is it with the child? ’tis well.  
Nor would I any miracle  
Might stir my sleeper’s tranquil trance,  
Or plague her painless countenance.  
I would not any seer might place  
His staff on my immortal’s face,  
Or, lip to lip, and eye to eye,  
Call back her pale mortality.”

ONE letter must be given, amongst the many received by the bereaved father, for the sake of him who wrote it :

New Lodge, Windsor Forest, February 11, 1868.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

I read in the paper “only and beloved,” and my heart sank within me. May the All-Merciful and Almighty God uphold you. Verily ye have need of His arms, and they *can* hold you up, yea, in this sore strife ; on this mighty tempest He can breathe His “Peace, be still,” and there shall be a great calm. But, indeed, my heart bleeds for you. I know the loss of the best beloved, of the eye of the whole picture of a man’s life here ; I know the anguish of closing the eye of the firstborn in his beauty and his glory ; and I know how the heart breaks and crumbles. But I know, too, how He can hold up of His mere

pity one who cannot, dare not, claim such mercy ; and so I know how far more he will hold up you. May His consolations abound. Many have prayed for you ; amongst them,

Your unworthy friend,

S. OXON.

They who were in close intercourse at this time with the Vicar of Newland speak of his unreserved submission, and the union of his will with the Divine will, as something which left a deep impression on their hearts. He had taught, in burning words, of union with the cross of Jesus as the Christian's highest blessing, and now, "by purest pleasures unbeguiled, to idolize or wife or child," he accepted, with absolute resignation, the stern, sweet token of his Master's love. But he partly broke down under the strain, and was quite unfit for his Lent work. It was taken by the Rev. Euseby Cleaver, who came for a few weeks to the Warden's lodge, lending his own house in London, not far from St. Barnabas' Church, to Mr. Skinner. There, and at All Saints', Margaret Street, he occasionally preached, and took part in the services.

To his mother he wrote :

I think I may say what I said at the first, that this little change has been of essential service to me, and, I think, to us all. To me it has been inexpressibly blessed, as helping me to bear my sorrow in the flesh, through much sympathy and kindness on the part of friends ; and still more, as enabling me more and more to realize, through holy and continual waiting upon the means of grace, how closely we are united to those who are gone before, and how thankfully we recognize their greater privilege in being taken into rest before us. I am nearer my sweet darling virgin child than ever I was on earth, through that union with Christ which we both share, and which is more and more vouchsafed to

us in its blessing, as we more and more worship and adore Him in the blessed Eucharist.

Mr. Bennett preached last Friday on "Heaven," at St. Barnabas'. I felt how true it was when he said that our *only* notion (as certainly our first notion) of the bliss and glory of heaven will be found in our joy in the presence of Christ in the blessed Eucharist. I hope and believe, darling mother, that this foretaste of joy and strength and comfort is already yours.

I had a great blessing vouchsafed to me the other night. I am not a "dreamer of dreams." I hardly ever have one—whether from unworthiness of holy dreams, or from natural causes, such as soundness of sleep and silence of imagination, I cannot tell. Yet so it is; I never dream—or rarely.

But God gave me a vision the other night, just for a moment, of my precious darling in Paradise.

I thought I and my wife were carried, we knew not how, over waters of intense darkness to a huge and inaccessible rock, which seemed to have no place wherein an entrance could be pierced. We were not sailing in a boat; there was nothing like the motion of the sea beneath us. It was water or air or atmosphere, and darker than darkness; but swiftly and easily and pleasantly we were borne over it, to the wall of the great rock. And then, where most unexpected, we penetrated into the rock; and found ourselves in a vast and infinite inner court, which was all water or air beneath, and no footing for mortal foot, only we were borne on whither we went. Up and on we were carried, into chambers and places filled with inhabitants all enjoying each other's society; and presently we were attended by special guides or ministering servants, whose office seemed to be to wait upon the inmates, who conducted us to where our darling was. I saw her, as distinctly as I ever saw her in life. Exactly the same, only flushed with a lovely colour, and without a speck of corruption; surrounded, as I thought, by flowers and birds, which she said she ever caught and gathered, and which never died; which were always fresh, and which never needed to be renewed. I drew near to embrace and kiss my precious one, as on earth I was

wont to do. I *did* kiss her (O, such an unearthly kiss !); and she kissed me and smiled on me with such a smile of unutterable bliss, as I see now, to my comfort and my joy, and will see, till I am privileged (by God's mercy if He will) to join her. But I felt that my lips pressed *nothing*, and my arms embraced *nothing*. It was purely spiritual; there was no flesh to resist or respond. It was a token of her bliss and joy, and recognition of my love, a solace to my sorrow, an earnest of my hope, a succour of my faith. I bless God for it.

He returned home for Holy Week, and took up again his usual work, Celebrating every morning, and giving the Three Hours' Meditation on Good Friday. Hitherto, since the opening of the new church, there had been Celebrations on Sundays and holy days, in Holy Week and Easter week. On Low Sunday this year, the vicar gave notice that the daily Celebration of the last fortnight would continue. And so it has, thank God; from that time there has never been a day when the showing forth of the Lord's death has not been made at the altar of Newland Church.

A full set of silk Eucharistic vestments were presented at Easter to the Vicar of Newland, and were henceforth used by him, without the least opposition either from Bishop or parishioners. He had written to the latter in his yearly pastoral letter, when introducing linen vestments the previous Christmas:

More often and more thoroughly we are taught the truth which is contained in worship by the act of worship represented to the eye, than by the ablest lecture *about* worship communicated to the ear. It is our duty, therefore, to teach you that the worship of Christ in the Holy Communion is a distinctively higher worship of Him, than the worship of Him in Morning or Evening Prayer.



And we are bound to teach you this fact by those "ornaments" of the church and of the minister which are appointed by authority to set forth that distinction.

I have not hurried you rashly into the presence of this truth.

I began in the old church, seven years ago, with such few materials as I had, to show you how much reverential *distinction* is due to the Holy Table, or altar, upon which altar the commemorative sacrifice of Christ's death is offered. I have abstained from all danger of misleading any, by *hastily* reviving the proper vestments of the person of the priest, before I had won you, or, at least, had done my best to win you, to recognize the propriety of vesting and adorning the altar, of which the priest is but a part.

But now the time has arrived when I can no longer keep back the fulness of the Church's witness to the distinctive greatness of the worship of Christ in the Holy Communion. I should feel myself guilty of treachery to the true English Church if I were any longer to abstain from obeying so plain an injunction as the use of the vestments proper to the celebration of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. I have therefore begun to obey the *principle* of the Church's law at Newland, by introducing Eucharistic vestments of fine linen which can neither cripple our means by their costliness, nor startle us by their colours.

It is no question between what is *essential* and what is *not* essential, in which there may be an endless diversity of opinion. The one and only question is—first, what has the whole of Christendom agreed to *require*? and, second, in what respect has the Church of England the power or the will to set aside that which the whole of Christendom requires?

This question is settled for you and for me by the law of the English Church, which requires me to wear the vestments which were "in this Church of England by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of King Edward VI."

The second year of Edward VI. was the year 1548-49. I have no more doubt as to what vestments were in use in the English Church in that year than I have as to what king was then sitting on the English throne. But if I had any doubt, it is taken

away by the inventory of those church goods (still to be seen in the Public Record Office in London) which Edward's Commissioners found, and "*left for use in the Church*" of Newland, as late as the sixth year of his reign—that is, in 1552–53.

Let me give you the list of "vestments."—

*"Capella de Newland.*

"1 Cope blue satin with branches.

"1 Cope of green crewel.

"1 Vestment (chasuble) of red satin with branches.

"1 Vestment of green crewel.

"1 Vestment of yellow crewel.

"With albs, stoles, and fannels."

Whether the worshippers at Newland, in these days of greater worldly wealth and prosperity, will be content to be outdone in the beauty and richness of the Eucharistic vestments by their poorer forefathers of the days of the Reformation, I must leave to them. Meantime, I have done my duty by restoring to life a great *principle* of the English Church's law—that the "ornaments of the minister" at the time of Holy Communion are designed to mark that highest act of worship as distinct from every other.

My earnest prayer to God for you is that, through this outward mark of distinction, so visible and plain to the eye, the hearts of all may be drawn more and more to discern the deep spiritual grandeur wherewith this great mystery is clothed—a mystery which at once overflows with refreshment and power to comfort and strengthen us, and with wonder and love to make us worship and adore.

The fresco painting of the walls of St. Leonard's was begun this autumn by two frescoes of the Resurrection and Ascension on either side of the east window, in memory of Agnes Raymond Skinner. Her memory was everywhere, her name continually mentioned, her grave a daily care. "Put white flowers on my little grave, mamma," she had

said when a little child ; and now her fair head literally lay amongst her mother's white rose trees, only a hedge of roses separating the burial-ground from the flower garden. Nor could her sweet memory ever "tinge with gloom the stream of joy that circled home." It was a bright home still, only the thoughts of those who dwelt there turned more and more from earthly joys to heavenly things. Two Retreats were held for the first time at Newland in 1870 : one for ladies, conducted by the late Father O'Neill ; the other for clergy, by Father Benson.

One of the Warden's most cherished schemes was to found a Clergy House of Rest, and he took and partly furnished a block of buildings at this time for the purpose. The scheme was not, however, carried out for some years ; meanwhile the rooms were used for Clergy Retreats.

Early in June, 1870, Father Benson sent a circular to many of the clergy, saying—

It is proposed to hold a conference at our Mission House on Thursday, July 21, with the intention of considering what steps can best be taken for the production of a Dictionary of Moral Theology. I hope that you will be able to take part in it, and that you will come to us at least the evening before. The Bishop of Brechin has kindly consented to preside.

Father O'Neill also wrote to Mr. Skinner, saying—

The enclosed paper will give you an idea of a proposed plan for supplying one of the great wants of our Church. Many of our best confessors have agreed to take part in it—Mr. Carter, Hutchings, King, White, Chambers, etc., besides Dr. Pusey and the Bishop of Brechin.

Will you kindly contribute also? We want to make it a really good book on the subject.

Please consider the matter, and send me any suggestions or criticisms.

With kindest regards to your wife,

Yours most truly in Jesus Christ,

S. W. O'NEILL.

Mr. Skinner took the deepest interest in the proposed work, and he was one of a committee of clergy chosen to carry it out. He drew out a rough sketch for his own guidance, and took it with him to a meeting of the committee in London, in November, 1870. The other members at once perceived that he had a far clearer scheme in his mind than any one else concerned in the matter, and they begged him to print his sketch for the consideration of others.

This request (he wrote) brought a responsibility for which I was not prepared, but from which I was unwilling to shrink when pressed upon me. But the mere outline which I had drawn up imperfectly for another purpose could hardly satisfy me for the object of the committee, and I had no choice but to study the whole subject *de novo*, and to recast the plan.

It was a labour which only ended with his life. The committee gave up their intention of treatises, by different authors, on various subjects of Moral Theology, and requested Mr. Skinner to publish, at his own risk, the "Synopsis" he had prepared, as, they said, an instalment of the whole undertaking. There was this advantage in the proposal, that the "Synopsis" would be complete as far as it went, covering the whole field of Moral Theology, and so classified and arranged that the student could at once turn to any subject on which he desired information, and find references

to the best writers on that subject. Perhaps the committee also felt that, as Mr. Skinner wrote in his preface—

it is quite possible that it may be a more real help to the clergy to have before them a *conspectus* of the whole subject, arranged in a scientific form, with direction to authorities which they may consult for themselves, and accept or not, according to their bearing upon the circumstances required, than to be supplied with a cut-and-dry manual, which might be felt to impose too much bondage to a system.

As the book cannot now be obtained,\* the following extract from the preface is given, as it expresses the author's thoughts on an important subject :—

I venture very earnestly to enter a *caveat* against that "system" of *philosophism* and casuistry which overran the whole Latin Church for more than a century from 1577, and still extensively retains its hold within the Roman communion. Of this theology it was said, in the preface to the French translation of St. Carlo Borromeo's "Instructiones" (demanded by the Synod of Paris in 1656, as a corrective, and brought out under the auspices of the Archbishop Peter de Marea), that "any amount of ignorance were far to be preferred to it—" *hujusmodi scientiâ quævis ignorantia longe sit potior!*"

We should do well to study carefully the treatise by Gerbert, "De recto et perverso usu Theologiæ Scholasticæ," and the exhaustive papers on "Conscience," "Probabilism," and "Rigor-

\* The "Synopsis of Moral and Ascetical Theology" was completed by the author before his death, and half of it had been passed through the press by himself, while the whole "copy" was found carefully prepared for the printers. All that was needed was to revise the latter half, and this was done under the close and able supervision of one whose judgment concerning his work Mr. Skinner had himself sought shortly before his death. The work was published by Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., in 1882. Alas! the whole edition, with the exception of about three hundred copies already sold, perished shortly afterwards in the great fire on the publishers' premises. Another edition would be printed should a sufficient number of persons express a wish to possess copies of a book which is the outcome of enormous labour and great learning.

ism," contained in the second volume of the "Apparatus ad Theologiam Christianam Dogmatico-Moralem" of Daniel Concina. A fair analysis of Concina's history of "Probabilism" will be found in the twentieth volume (p. 224) of the "Bibliothèque Sacrée" of the Dominican Fathers Richard and Girand. That my view of the case may not appear to be the mere prejudice of an Anglican, let one passage suffice for a general view of the state of things in the middle of the last century, from the learned dissertation of Père Graveson of the Sorbonne, "De Verâ Methodo docendi et addiscendi Theologiam Moralem," 1740: "Sufficit si generatim dicam alios ad nihilum pene redegissee decem precepta Decalogi, vanis et distortis interpretationibus, quas ei suggestit novum probabilitatis commentum; alios calumniam, homicidia, duella et abortus a peccato excusasse, dummodo hæc fierent animo proprium conservandi honorem; alios usuras et simonias licitas reddidisse; alios amphibologiarum, et restrictionum mentalium usum permississe; alios omnem ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ rigorem in administratione Sacramentorum Pœnitentiæ et Eucharistiæ penitus sustulisse; alios præcepta Ecclesiæ de jejunio, de celebratione festorum, etc., multis cavillis oppugnasse; alios denique magnum de diligendo Deo in lege gratiæ, quæ est lex amoris, præceptum elevare, totisque viribus tollere de medio tentasse. Sic novitii theologi e scholâ nati legem Christi non solum suavem reddere conati sunt, sed etiam ejus onus ab humeris nostris excutere contra totius antiquitatis normam et sententiam. 'O Apostolorum tempora infelicissima!' exclamat pius Carthusianorum quondam Generalis *Gujo*—'O viros ignorantiae tenebris involutos, et omni miseratione dignissimos, qui ut ad vitam pertingerent propter verba labiorum Dei tam duras vias custodiebant et hæc nostra compendia nesciebant.'"

No one can have studied the manuals of casuistry ever so little, or known ever so slightly the practice of the books, without recognizing the dangers of a system of trammels. I am in harmony with the convictions of the best spiritual guides of the Western Church when I say that one of the best qualifications of a good confessor is to be neither systematic, nor personal, nor absolute

in his principles of direction. "Systems" are mischievous in politics, in philosophy, in education, in economy. The spirit of mere system is a danger everywhere ; in the domain of conscience it is an absolute evil. Of course there are great *principles* of moral and spiritual direction which never change, to which also there is in each conscience a responsive chord by which it touches God. But these principles co-exist with an endless variety of forms in which they are applicable to individuals. There is unity in diversity and diversity in unity. As in the planetary world each star is subject to general laws, and yet each star has its own particular law of gravitation towards its own queen ; so in the great family of the Catholic Church, bound by the common law of duty to the common head, each individual has his own character and heart and conscience, and the function of the spiritual guide is not to cramp them into a certain shape, but to direct them according to their own proper and individual necessities. The initiative of healthy direction does not come from the confessor, still less does it come from a type which has been formalized into an ideal. It comes straight from the penitent, enlightened by the gift of God the Holy Ghost, as to his special need. The mission of the priest (this is Fénelon's view) is to aid, to perfect, to complete. He is to take for his basis that of which the individual soul is capable ; not that which he puts there, but that which he finds.

A long and elaborate introduction to the work had been projected, and was begun. It was to be divided into three heads, treating of (1) The claims of souls upon the priesthood ; (2) The duty of the priest towards souls ; (3) The priest's preparation for his office. Those to whose judgment the matter has been referred have decided that part of the introduction is too valuable to be omitted. It will be best given separately in the next chapter. Several years after it was begun, Mr. Skinner wrote to the Rev. W. Nevins :

July 15, 1880.

MY VERY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

. . . I am afraid that you will not be satisfied to hear that the "Synopsis" makes no way. The printer is still at fault in many ways ; but the author is, probably, the greatest culprit of all. I stick in the "Introduction"—at the immensity of the field to be covered, and the huge difficulty of compression. My aim is to prove that no science and civilization, so called, can supply the place of the moral law of the Catholic Church in the necessary work of counteracting evil and disseminating good in the earth. The Church *alone* has power to solve the great problem of evil, and to loosen its hold upon men and women ; and for that purpose she must be suffered to teach and to apply *now*, in these latter times, that ancient system of morals which she has received from God the Holy Spirit, and handed on from age to age. . . . As I gather my material for all this, I am more and more appalled by the task I have set myself.



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CLAIMS OF SOULS UPON THE PRIESTHOOD.

"The ministers of the Gospel are the ministers of reconciliation, are commanded to restore such persons as are overtaken in a fault, and to that purpose they come to offer their ministry, if they may have cognizance of the fault and person.

"In the matter of prudence, it is not safe to trust a man's self in the final condition and last security of a man's soul, a man being no good judge in his own case. And when a duty is so useful in all cases, so necessary in some, and encouraged by promises evangelical, and by the canon of all Churches, and the example of all ages, and taught us even by the proportions of duty, and the analogy to the power ministerial, and the very necessities of every man; he that for stubbornness, or sinful shamefacedness, or prejudice, or any other criminal weakness, shall decline to do it in the days of his danger, when the vanities of the world are worn off and all affections to sin are wearied and the sin itself is pungent and grievous, and we are certain we shall not escape shame for them hereafter unless we be ashamed of them here, and use all the proper instruments of their pardon, this man, I say, is very near death, but very far off from the Kingdom of Heaven."—BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR, *Works*, vol. iv. p. 512, Heber's edition.

1. It is impossible to resist the conviction of sin, and the thirsting after holiness, and the longing for a closer union with God, which are happily growing among our people. For one who is content with the standard of external decorum which fulfilled, for the most part, in time past, the popular ideal of an "established" religion, there are a hundred who are dissatisfied with it now. Man's life on earth is more realized as an actual personal warfare with evil—a warfare with which all other forms of war are, in comparison, but shadows of conflict; because, while other wars are about

things external to himself, this is a struggle to be carried on within himself, and a struggle for life, and that life immortal. There is an awakened consciousness of helplessness, in himself, running alongside of this revived conviction. And there is a warmer aspiration towards some divinely appointed instrumentality out of himself, some positive and tangible channel through which the mercifully ordained help of God shall be conveyed. Men's eyes instinctively turn to those who are appointed "in Christ's stead" to say, "Be ye reconciled to God."\* They turn to the priesthood.

2. It is true that a parallel line of thought is to be recognized, keeping its hold, no less actively, upon men's minds, running in the very opposite direction—insisting upon human perfectability and the absolute sufficiency of nature, in each separate personality, for all the necessities of man. But the intensity of belief in some supernatural provision of God against the supernatural evils incident to a life of supernatural trial has only gained strength in others by this antagonism. And these believers are, thanks be to God, in such large and growing numbers that they can no longer be neglected or despised.

3. What is their belief but the result of their experience? More, therefore, than belief, it is knowledge which they have acquired, by honestly studying themselves in the light of the Word of God. That Word does not say that war is merely *incident* to man's life, but that the whole of his life *is* war,† and war not in light and easy skirmishes, which suddenly come and go—not in occasional incursions of a visible enemy, which pass off without the trouble of opposing him—but in decisive battles, internecine struggles, for life eternal. This is more than the belief of thousands of our people; it is their knowledge. They know also that they are fighting with powers whom they cannot see—a supernatural army—"not flesh and blood, but principalities and powers, rulers of the darkness of this world;"‡ that is, with personal angels, wicked spirits, endued with supernatural subtlety and

\* 2 Cor. v. 2, vi. 1; cf. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

† Job vii. 1.

‡ Eph. vi. 12.

strength, and with vast experience, who have everything to gain in the contest, and nothing except victory to lose. It has seemed to them, therefore, more than a theologian's speculation,\* that against each child baptized into the Church, there are set one hundred devils to spoil him of the "new man in Christ" which he has put on, and that the cry of Delilah is incessant upon the ear of Samson, "*The devils are upon thee, O Christian soul!*"†

The conscious necessities of the soul send men, under such conditions, instinctively to those whom God has appointed to give them aid.

4. Again, there is among us a quickened sense of the loss which is sustained by an unwatchful life in the midst of snares; while common sense suggests, to the least thoughtful, that no watchfulness, as a mere attitude of the mind, is likely to be permanent unless it is continually strengthened by reinforcements of substantial aid imported from without. "Thou art most assaulted," are St. Jerome's words to Heliodorus,‡ "when thou art unconscious of the assault. Our enemy lurks round thee as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and dost thou suppose it peace? He sitteth lurking in the thievish corners of the streets, and privily in his lurking dens doth he murder the innocent; and art thou sleeping softly in thy leafy bower of shade—a certain prey? Thou art wrong, therefore, thou art wrong if thou thinkest that the Christian is not always under persecution. For it is thus that self-indulgence, thus that avarice, each in turn, attacks me. It is thus that my 'belly' § aims at dethroning Christ from my heart as God, and that lust seeks to expel the Holy Ghost from His dwelling-place within me, and makes me to violate His temple. The enemy, therefore, *does* persecute me under a thousand names (*cui nomina mille mille nocendi artes*) and with a thousand arts;

\* "Numerus hostium nostrorum tantus ut Theologorum aliqui dicant unicum hominem a centum diabolis oppugnari" ("Drexelii *Palæstra Christiana*," pars. I, cap. I, sec. I).

† Judges xvi. 20.

‡ St. Jerome, Ep. I. "Ad Heliodorum:" "De laude vitæ solitariæ."

§ Phil. iii. 19.

and shall I, in my misery, call myself a conqueror whilst I am a captive?"

Sustained caution, therefore, is the sinner's ordinary protection. But this caution *has* to be sustained. And it is the priest's office to sustain it. The enemy knows that he is never resisted except when the object of his attack distinctly recognizes the fact of an assault. An enlarged power of this recognition is what our people are claiming at our hands.

5. There is an old German proverb: "The devil's powder makes no noise." Hence, the victory is continually lost before the battle has begun. And the wounds which have been inflicted are often mortal; whilst, worst of all, the wounded soul has no sense of pain. It is in the experience of us all to see men mortally stricken by sin, while they do but laugh, and forget, and die. If they had but felt themselves to be wounded, they had sought the surgeon to be healed. If they had but *known* their loss, they had earnestly hastened to have it repaired. If St. Paul had been—what he declares he was *not*—"ignorant of his devices,"\* Satan would have had "the advantage over him."

Ignorance of the presence of sin when it is actually killing the soul, and prejudice against the avowal of sin when there is ignorance neither of its presence nor of its effects, are two devices of his, of which we see the fatal "advantage" every day. The sufferers will lay the blame—and rightly—on the shoulders of those priests who have done nothing, either for themselves or for others, to take such ignorance away. "If we knew," says St. Chrysostom,† "that a serpent was lurking in the bed, we should take infinite pains to destroy it. But the devil is hiding in the secret corners of our hearts, and we think that no evil is happening. Idly and confidently we have taken to lie down under it (*ἀνατεπτόκαμεν*). The reason is, we do not see the devil with bodily eyes; although, for this very reason, all the more watchfulness is required. A visible foe we can easily escape; but we cannot escape an invisible foe, unless we are armed at every point."

\* 2 Cor. ii. 11.

† In Rom. v. 18; Hom. x. 6, Ben. Ed., vol. ix. p. 529, C. D.

It is with this fulness of armour that our people have a right to be clothed.

6. No question is raised about the *fact* that "God hath given power and commandment to His ministers" in the Church of England, "to declare and pronounce to His people" in England, "being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins." Nor is it possible to doubt that, before this remission can be "pronounced," the thing to be remitted must also be pronounced; otherwise the minister might be "remitting" what ought to be "retained," or what the "people" have never "repented" of at all. But a theory has been invented to restrict the use of this power on the part of God's "ministers"—the theory of what is called exceptional exercise, by the English priest, of his office of healing the English people.

If this theory were true, it would involve a condition of "exceptional" sinfulness in the English people. Let it be conceded that the necessity for disclosing the wounds of the penitent, in order to that function of the healer which is committed by Christ to His ministry, is to be measured by their severity, by their inherent deadliness, and by the suffering which they inflict, it will still be difficult to prove that this severity of deadliness and suffering is an "exceptional" characteristic of the sins of the English people. Yet if, as ambassadors—standing, "in Christ's stead," between souls and an offended God, to "reconcile" them to Him—we are only to act "exceptionally," it can only be because the English people offend God, by deadly sin, only on "exceptional" occasions. Is this so? Will our people say this for themselves, as vehemently as it has been said for (does it not rather seem *against*?) them? Does the English Prayer-Book suggest any such idea or any such word as "exceptional" when it simply asserts liberty and repudiates compulsion, in stating the inevitable course to be pursued by those whose consciences must be quieted, or who must be prepared to die?

That a sinner should be unable to "quiet his own conscience," even when he has quite succeeded in disregarding it, who is or has been in the habit of committing deadly sin, without letting go

his faith in the means of grace, so far from being the "exception," is the general rule among men of all nations. What is there to make such a case "exceptional" in England?

That a *state* of readiness to receive Christ in the blessed Eucharist, and to meet Him in death and judgment at *any* moment (which is the only state of life consistent with true Christianity), demands a corresponding *habit* of purifying and cleansing the conscience, so far from being true only in the sense of occasional and particular and "exceptional" acts, must be universally true, if it be true at all . . .

It is true that light must first have been given from above, to recognize the supernatural gifts of contrition, and of pardon conveyed through the commissioned priest. But, assuming the presence of such light illuminating the conscience in perfect accord with the freedom of the will, the power of the Holy Ghost, in converting souls, cannot, without blasphemy, be restrained to fitting, "exceptional" occasions of which other men looking on (though they may stand in the very highest places) venture to constitute themselves the judges.

Given two conditions on the side of the sinner—(1) the absolute certainty of his faith by the grace of God in the Divine appointment of the priest's absolving office, and (2) the absolutely voluntary choice of his own will to set the sacerdotal power of "binding and loosing" in motion for his personal relief—then no human authority can, with impunity, restrain to certain "occasions" those powers which Christ Himself has instituted in His mercy for the consolation of all men at all times.

We cannot force our powers upon the sinner. But when he offers himself—I will not say freely, I will say more—earnestly, fervidly, imploringly, and under a conviction that they are means of grace provided for his soul, claiming them at our hands, it will be at the peril of our own souls if we refuse to exercise them.

I will justify these strong words by stronger words than mine, and from a source which Protestants will respect. In his seventh sermon (on St. Luke xix. 18), Chillingworth, the author of "The Religion of Protestants," has these unmistakable words: "Can

any man be so unreasonable as once to imagine to himself that, when our Saviour after His resurrection, having received, as Himself saith, 'all power in heaven and on earth,' and having 'led captivity captive,' came then to bestow gifts; when He, in so solemn a manner, having first breathed upon His disciples, thereby conveying and insinuating the Holy Ghost into their hearts, renewed unto them, or rather confirmed and sealed unto them, that glorious commission which before He had given to St. Peter, sustaining, as it were, the person of the whole Church, whereby He delegated to them an authority of binding and loosing sins upon earth, with a promise that the proceedings in the court of heaven would be directed and regulated by theirs on earth—can any man think so unworthily of our Saviour as to esteem these words of His for no better than compliment, for nothing but Court holy water" (p. 185).

"Since Christ, for your benefit and comfort, hath given such authority to His ministers, upon your unfeigned repentance and contrition, to absolve and release you from your sins, why should I doubt or be unwilling to persuade you to make your advantage of this gracious promise of our Saviour? Why should I envy you the participation of so heavenly a blessing? Truly, if I should deal thus with you I should prove myself a malicious, unsatiable, malignant preacher. I should wickedly and unjustly, and against my own conscience, seek to defraud you of those glorious blessings which our Saviour hath intended for you" (pp. 187, 188).

"Therefore, in obedience to His gracious will, and as I am warranted and even enjoined by my holy Mother the Church of England, expressly in the Book of Common Prayer, in the Rubric for the Visitation of the Sick (which doctrine this Church hath likewise embraced so far), I beseech you that, by your practice and use, you will not suffer this commission which Christ hath given to His ministers to be a vain form of words, without any sense under them—to be an antiquated expired commission of no use or validity in these days.\* But whensoever you find your-

\* Compare St. Augustine: "*Nemo sibi dicat, occulte ago, apud Deum ago; novit Deus qui mihi ignoscat, quia in corde meo ago. Ergo sine causa*"

selves charged and oppressed especially with such crimes as they call *peccata vastantia conscientiam*, that you would have recourse to your spiritual physician and freely disclose the nature and malignancy of your disease, that he may be able, as the cause shall require, to proportion a remedy, either to search it with corrosives, or comfort and temper it with oil. And come not to him with such a mind as you would go to a learned man experienced in the Scripture, as one that can speak comfortable and quieting words to you, but as to one that hath authority, delegated to him from God Himself, to absolve and acquit you of your sins. If you shall do this, assure your souls that the understanding of man is not able to conceive that transport and excess of joy and comfort which shall accrue to that man's heart that is persuaded that he hath been made partaker of this blessing, orderly and legally, according as our Saviour Christ hath prescribed.

"I have dealt honestly and freely with you—it may be more freely than I shall be thanked for; but I should have sinned against my own soul if I had done otherwise. I should have conspired with our adversaries of Rome against our own Church, in affording them such an advantage to blaspheme our most holy and undefiled religion" (pp. 188, 189).

7. Neither is it reasonable to suggest (1) that the sinner's ignorant contentment with himself is sufficient to exempt him from the interposition of our express authority to bring him to the knowledge of, and to the remedy for, his sins; nor (2) that the exercise of that authority precludes him from the attainment of "health" because it necessarily presupposes a "morbid" and "diseased" condition of soul.

For (1) while the ignorance of self-complacency in sin is the devil's main device for accomplishing man's ruin—it is one of our main words of counteraction, by the help of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten the conscience, so that the sinner may become more and more *dissatisfied* with himself. "Quietness" of a conscience

dictum est *quæ solveritis in terra soluta erunt in calo*? Ergo, sine causa sunt claves datæ Ecclesiæ Dei? Frustramus Evangelium? Frustramus Verba Christi?"—Sermo cccxcii. "Ad Conjugatos," Ben. Ed. vol. v. p. 1804, E. F.



will never be attained by that process which has been called "training itself." The conscience must be illuminated and taught and disciplined from without. Self is man's most subtle and devouring foe. We know too well how men have "trained" themselves into a state of quiescence, under habits of deadly sin, both of the body and of the mind. Luxury and gluttony of the flesh, pride, covetousness, envy, anger, sloth of the spirit—not knowing, in the true sense of "knowledge," because not willing to know, that "they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." \*

Dr. Donne, the distinguished Dean of St. Paul's in the reign of James I., said, "The more I find confession or any religious practice repugnant to my own nature, the further will I go in it."

We only learn what sin is and what holiness is—how to unlearn the one and how to practise the other, by the same process of discipline by which proficiency in other arts and sciences is attained.

And (2) while a diseased *conscience* and a diseased *soul* are by no means convertible terms, a *state* of spiritual "health" is not, I suspect, the normal condition of souls with whom the English priest, any more than the priest of other lands, has to deal.

We are not called to bring the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. "They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick." So that it might suffice, in argument, for us to say: "Yes, the multitudes of sick are so vast, so increasing, that we accept the imputation of 'disease' wherewith it is sought to identify, if not to disparage, that priestly office of 'confession' which we are commissioned to discharge." But while there is no such thing as absolute immunity from spiritual, any more than from bodily "sickness," and while "health" is but a relative term to describe an escape, or a transition, or a recovery from disease—into which at any moment the unguarded soul may fall—the *conscience* which is most keenly sensitive to the least approach of evil to the soul is furthest removed from the imputation of "morbidity." Moreover, if "disease" is a variable quantity, so

\* Gal. v. 19-21.

is "health." The same sins which make no conscious impression upon one, are very "grievous" and "intolerable" to another. And the same person, under the light of the convincing Spirit, will recognize "sickness" in himself by those very marks which he once mistook for an indication of health.

An experienced diagnostician, outside of the patient, is, therefore, absolutely needed for the infirm of soul as much as for the infirm of body. At least, it is as vitally important for the soul to be kept *in* health as to be kept *from* disease. And the claims of the patient on the spiritual physician are as irresistible for the one as for the other.

8. It will hardly be contended that the Church of England set herself to invent a new law of "repentance" when she awoke to find herself and her children isolated from that visible communion with the whole body of Western Christendom within which she both learned and practised the old and original common law.

Had the accident of separation and isolation—which she did not cause, but has to bear, in the providence of God—been accompanied with evidence in continuity of her own exemption from those causes of corruption which were wont to make the spiritual life of her sons and daughters to decay, as they do still the separate and corporate spiritual life of every people, it might have been argued with plausibility that we have no longer need for the "ancient discipline" of repentance in any form. But, as things stand, the reasonable assumption is that the English Church, compelled by the old necessities, abides by the old laws. That the same community which prays that her penitents may "repent according to the preaching of John the Baptist,"\* who brought all Judea "unto him, confessing their sins"—which publicly laments the loss of the ancient severity of penal judgment, uttered in public against the persons of individual sinners previous to their absolution and restoration to communion, and which earnestly wishes that this "discipline" may be restored again, together with that previous confession in private to the "penitentiary" which the public discipline involved—that the same

\* See Collect for Nativity of St. John the Baptist, and Mark i. 4, 5.

community which makes this profession intends at the same time to discourage all personal discipline whatever, and *prefers* that every guilty conscience should settle both the meaning of "repentance" and the terms of penitence and restoration secretly within itself, is so unreasonable and self-contradictory a proposition that nothing but the violence of deep-seated unreasoning prejudice can account for its appearance among sane men.

It is beyond doubt that the English Church, in that spirit of comprehension (call it "compromise" if you will) which inspired her policy amid the troubles of unsettlement, leaves her children who sin perfectly free to use all, or to omit to use some, of the remedies which she has received to offer them. It is, further, beyond doubt that the tone of her mind has been, from the first, to lament the relaxation of that discipline which she admires in the Primitive Church. It is therefore not only *not* certain, but in the highest degree unreasonable to suppose, that, in regard to the *one* remedial measure which she commends to them as being, at once, the discipline and the consolation of the individual and separate conscience, it is a commendation which she encourages them to reject.\*

\* See Homilies, Book ii. 1, 2, p. 176, and Jewel's "Apology:" "Nam nos quidem utimur priscis et avitis legibus; et quantum his moribus & temporibus in tantâ corruptelâ rerum omnium potest fieri, disciplinam Ecclesiasticam diligenter et serio administramus" (p. 1201).

## CHAPTER XVI.

### LETTERS OF COUNSEL.

1870-1872.

"What, many times I musing asked, is man,  
If grief and care  
Keeps far from him? he know not what he can,  
What cannot bear.

"He, till the fire hath purged him, doth remain  
But merely dross:  
To lack the loving discipline of pain  
Were endless loss."

IT was perhaps during the years between the death of his child and his leaving Newland that the spiritual work there increased so much as seriously to injure the vicar's health. The trustees of the almshouses had, in 1869, withdrawn the support of foundation-boys, on whom the church choir depended, and also the organist's salary, but for some years the choral service was still maintained in the greatest excellence, and in 1871 there can scarcely have been a village church in England where the services were so perfect, both for beauty and reverence. During three successive Lents, 1870-71-72, the Warden gave "conferences" after the five o'clock service on Thursdays, and at these times the church was almost full. They were intended for those not altogether beginners in the spiritual

life, and perhaps they had even more influence upon souls than his sermons.

In September, 1871, Mr. Skinner went abroad for his holiday, and, with his wife, went to Ammergau for the Passion Play, and thence from Munich to Ulm, where he notes having a two hours' most interesting talk with Dr. Döllinger, and by Innsbrück to North Italy, delighting in time spent at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana at Milan. They returned over the Splügen by Como, and through Switzerland and Antwerp to England, where he arrived in stronger health, and got through the rest of the year fairly well. He went for a short time to Brighton before the next Lent, being again unwell and quite unfit to work. To his wife he writes on the eve of the anniversary of their child's death :

Brighton, St. Agatha, 1872.

I am anxious for you to get this to-morrow morning, so I write *at once*, now that I am out of church, where I have been for Mattins and Sext. How sweet to think of our darling on this the anniversary of her last day of "weariness" ("I am very weary—HE was weary too!"), now with St. Agatha and the troops of virgins, feeding among the lilies ! We sang the hymn

"In blessed troops they follow Thee,  
With dance and song and melody,"

though not to the dear familiar tune of which she was so fond. But nothing so realizes her bright eye and thoughtful reverent face, to my mind, and brings her present, as that lovely hymn. Ah yes . . . I can sympathize with your weakest moment at this time ; so you need not restrain the natural vent of tears, and even of grief, as you recall the incidents of the last forty-eight hours of that precious virgin's life, in the struggle of separation between her frail and broken body and her keen, undimmed, and sensitive spirit.

Of course one cannot but dwell upon the picture which ineffaceably remains printed on the memory—on yours naturally, more than on any other—the little bed, with the worn-out, pale, languid, yet eager, thirsting, longing face upon it : and every word she uttered, and every sigh she breathed ; from the highest hope down to the bitterest self-reproach ;—everything comes back and touches me just as freshly and acutely, as if it were all taking place, really over again. I lay awake most of last night, and gave myself up unreservedly and freely to recall everything, just as it was pleased to come back to me.

I think, my —, that there is good for us in being able to reproduce to ourselves that solemn scene ; and, above all, in being able to consider that *we* ourselves must have our own turn as chief actors in a similar one, when we, too, “shall lie down in the dust.” And we could hardly be able to reproduce the scene, and be natural and true, unless also we reproduced something of the emotion which touched and wrung our hearts to the centre. You must not, therefore, try to suppress what is not only natural to your mother’s affections, but good for your spiritual life, as keeping fresh in you the reality of the last struggle for which we must all be prepared.

But, thank God, there is another side to this sweet and bitter anniversary ; and the sweet overpowers and masters the bitter—not by annihilating it, but by absorbing it into itself. There is nothing *yet*, in all our married life of unvarying mercy from God’s hands, to approach in greatness the mercy wherewith He blessed us and our “little one” whom He lent us, when He was pleased so early to take her home to Himself : to take her in her virginhood of fresh and ardent youth, before she could be seared and withered by the scorching sun of the world.

A blessing, foremost of all, for herself—to be so soon delivered ; so soon matured and ripened ; so soon set free from the bondage of evil ; so soon brought into the very end of her being. For, did not God make her for Himself, and only lend her to us to prepare her for Him ? And a blessing to us—to be so soon told that our part in her and for her was finished ; to be so soon relieved

from the burden of anxiety for her soul (an anxiety which, if we could measure it fully against the risks of sin, would be simply overwhelming); to be so soon comforted with the comfort of knowing that she is with Jesus, which is "better than life;" and that, though the flesh which she took of us must first see corruption in the grave, the spirit which dwelt in that flesh, and which (because of that indwelling) is allied to *our* spirit, is for ever free in the presence of Him who gave it. What blessing to us (next to the blessing of perfect union with the whole body of Christ in unveiled glory) can be compared to this? How are *we* not drawn nearer to Jesus, by the consciousness of her whom, through us, God brought into being, being near Him! How have not our prayers and praises and Eucharists been intensified in their frequency and earnestness, and, it may be sometimes also, in their *sensible* joy and consolations, since this blessing befell us, that our "little one" "was not, for God took her!"

How have we not been more and more weaned from this earth and its allurements, and made to live with the far greater and more enjoyable company of the spirits of the just, and to lose our relish for any society less satisfying! And can this blessing be exaggerated—the blessing of learning, by experience here below, that "There is none, O Lord, in heaven but Thee, none on earth that we can love in comparison of Thee"? Comfort yourself, my —, with these thoughts. To-morrow (D.V.) I celebrate at 8.30, and shall of course be with *you* as well as with her. . . .

He returned home a few days before Ash-Wednesday, and threw himself into his Lenten work "as though he had been a giant." It was his last Lent of continuous work on earth. On April 23 his beloved mother passed away, in her ninety-third year; clear in mind and heart to the last, and taken to her rest just before the days came when her son could no longer have visited and ministered to her. Every Monday morning he Celebrated in her room, to which she had been confined for a year, and this he did for

the last time on Monday, April 22, not knowing that in less than twenty-four hours her pilgrimage would be over.

It was certainly this year that the final break-down came, from which he never entirely rallied. He had, at Canon King's request, conducted a priests' Retreat at Cuddesdon in July, and in August went for a holiday to Wales. There, at the house of his friend, Mr. Wynne of Aberamfra, he became very ill, and was confined to bed for some days; returning home in September weak and far from recovered, but persisting in preaching, though sitting in the pulpit. All the rest of this year he was more or less out of health, but he did not take less work; rather that which came to him from outside his parish seemed to increase every month.

There was 'scarcely ever a time, to the very last, when he was not ready to spend himself in trying to help others spiritually. "What a store there must be of love for him in heaven—of those whom, by God's grace, he won to God, or to whom he was the channel of God's love, and loved in Him!" Dr. Pusey wrote of him, after his death.

The four following letters were written to a young friend whose faith had been disturbed by reading sceptical writings:—

MY DEAR —,

You must not be harder on me, in your mind, than I am on myself. I have been unkind in outward seeming, in not writing to you upon *the* point of your last note, viz. your desire for Holy Communion.

But, I am not unkind in my heart: I love your soul *most* dearly, and your poor little heart's troubles are daily in my prayers; and I *know* you are trying to be patient and good with me.



But I am very broken in health, and writing, and thinking even, wear me sadly. I know I could not (for I ought not to) sanction your receiving the blessed Sacrament in the state of faith and repentance in which you avowed yourself to be when we last had intercourse. And yet I was not, nor am I now, up to the mark of writing, at length, to say why.

So now I must ask you to trust me, simply. You *ought not* to go to that heavenly feast, until you can do so with perfect faith and penitence, and with a purified conscience; otherwise you would throw yourself back, indefinitely, in the course upon which, I hope and trust, you are embarked.

God bless you!

Your ever affectionate  
J. S.

I am truly thankful for your letter. I did not expect wonders, and I am not disappointed. If you will only persevere in the course which I have appointed for you, as an exercise of self-mortification, in the consciousness of your own ignorance and presumption in doubting, your full blessing will come *in the end*, if God wills.

The four acts of devotion to the Divine Trinity will be most useful, as acts of *submission* of yourself, even if you do not use them as acts of formal worship. So do not intermit them. Never mind their being *beyond* you: of course they are beyond you. God is beyond you. Still, you must humbly *aim* to reach Him. I don't want you to be unreal; but it is not unreal to give to God what He claims as His due. It is not merely that we have to think of what *we* can give, but also of what He demands. And there is no unreality in acting solely upon the latter thought, even when we are not sure of the former.

For the present, I do not want you to read any other portions of the Bible than those which I have appointed. But read carefully now, every day, the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, as examples of true philosophy in morals.

Say, many times a day, that prayer which has struck you—

"Lord, I believe whatever Thou hast revealed, teach Thou me," etc., in Dr. P——'s "Miracles of Prayer."

I will read "Lord Lyttelton," when I have time, and tell you what it suggests.

But, dearest child, do not yield to the tempter who desires to absorb you in *thoughts* of speculation, instead of a life of practice.

"Lord, what shall this man do?" was a speculation which our blessed Lord rebuked, even in His first apostle. If you desire to avoid hell, and to be blessed in heaven, live in faith and hope and love with God and man, in humble obedience to the call of every duty, and you can then afford to *wait* till the "veil is taken away," for the solution of all mysteries.

God bless you !

Your ever loving  
J. S.

MY DEAR —,

I feel very guilty. You ought to have heard from me in return for your last very nice, and on the whole satisfactory letter, long ago ; but I have been in the utmost uncertainty as to health ever since I left England, and sometimes (as lately at —, and even till to-day) very broken indeed and good for nothing. So I have had a continual shrinking from the effort of writing, because I am always the worse for it. You will, therefore, be tender with me and not judge me hardly ? I have never forgotten you at my best moments ; and my faith is much more in anxious and earnest prayer for you, than in any number of volumes of letters, if I could have written them. Had you been with me in person, it would have been perhaps different ; at least, it would have been comparatively easy to *me* to have done what I could to help you to recover the precious things you had lost.

We are now on our way home, which (D.V.) we hope to reach for next Sunday ; and I am, therefore, not without hope that I may be able to see you some time in the course of the summer, if I am permitted to abide at my post at dear Newland. But I am very unwilling to leave you any longer without just one word

respecting the *obligations* under which you stand to observe the counsels which I gave you before we parted.

I. In respect of the discipline as to reading, etc. I think it will be, undoubtedly, for your good to persevere in keeping all my directions; because their object was mainly, not only to systematize and methodize study on the most important of all subjects, in place of pursuing the desultory and capricious, not to say *wilful*, choice into which you had fallen, but also to exercise you in the wholesome discipline of restraint, which is of the essence of soundness in intellectual and moral and spiritual health, as it is of physical. But I do not desire to press this upon you any longer, if you wish to be free; because I am not entitled to force my own sense of what is best for you upon your will, a moment longer than you are heartily willing.

II. In respect of your reception of the highest of all Christian blessings and privileges, the Communion of the Body and Blood of our dearest Lord. It *is* a blessed sign of returning grace that you should be again reaching out for that mercy, and feeling your need of it, and in any degree longing for it. But I love your dear soul too much to be willing that you should incur any risk of eating and drinking to its hurt; and therefore I have impressed upon you the wholesome spirit of discipline, which guided the early Church in withholding that gift from her children who had lapsed into unbelief, even for many years, until they had been fully and completely restored to absolute and undoubted and *undoubting* faith.

There is hardly a greater peril (St. Paul being witness) than to receive the greatest mystery of the faith *without faith*; not “discerning,” that is, not *distinguishing* the Body of our Lord (in full faith in the incarnation of God in Christ, who then gives Himself to the faithful) from common food. And, I would not, for all the world, encourage you to approach the Sacrament without such faith and such “discernment,” held honestly and implicitly—at least, to the utmost of your conscious will. I should, therefore, here also greatly prefer that you should, as far as you know how, secure the absolute simplicity of your faith and repentance *first*;

and *then*, in all humility and penitence, draw near to Him, in the mystery of His own appointment.

But here again, also, I have no power and no desire to interpose my own convictions of your duty between you and your conscience, for a moment longer than your conscience is enabled to accept them ; so that you release *me* from the responsibility. I am anxious to say thus much, lest you should be chafing under any supposed bondage ; or suffering, in any degree, in the freedom of your soul, from any supposed oppression of an outward rule.

May God the Holy Spirit guide and lead and comfort you, and bring you into the light of truth and peace, is ever the most earnest prayer, my dear —, of

Your very loving and true friend,

J. S.

MY DEAR —,

On the subject of confession, it is impossible to mistake the distinctness of the two senses in which it may be used.

I. In its appointed place, in necessary relation to that power of reconciliation of sinners to God with which Christ has vested His ministers, generally called the “power of the keys”—“Whosoever sins ye remit,” etc. ; and

II. In the discretionary consultation with a spiritual friend, to whom, in order to advice, confession of one’s sins and faults may be made.

In the first sense, confession is a part of penitence, and has a sacramental character. The penitent has recourse to it, as to the ordained way of God, and in order (not to advice and counsel from man, but) to pardon and absolution from God. You cannot, therefore, separate the thought or the idea of this confession from the thought and idea, or from the gift itself of pardon. And so, this confession is *part* of an ordinance in which the minister takes his place, not as a mere friend, but as a priest, an ambassador of God, in which also he is bound by the canonical law of secrecy, more than by the law of honour.

In the second sense, confession may be a great test of the

earnestness and sincerity of one's penitence ; just as telling one's mother, or brother, or husband, or wife of one's sin against God and them, would be a mark of humility and earnest purpose of amendment. But—not looking to God's pardon as the end, or to submission to the appointed "power of the keys" as the means—there would be, in it, nothing attained of that which especially is promised. And the position of the minister to whom the confession is made would be, not that of a priest, but of a friend, and his bond of secrecy would be nothing but a bond of honour.

If I understand you aright, you tell me that, as yet, your faith in the ordinance, in the first sense, would not warrant you in resorting to it "for the benefit of absolution," but that as a remedy, *without absolution*, you would be glad to *try* it?

But that means that you would like to *try* it without the remedy. Absolution is the remedy to which confession leads up ; otherwise there is in confession discipline, but no "remedy" at all. I am therefore led to believe that you really *mean* to say that you would be glad to use confession in the second sense in which I have defined it ; at all events, until God has given you more light to see your way clear.

And my reply is—By all means, do what you *can* to satisfy the need which you feel, and humbly and quietly wait till you can do more. It is far better to let the heart open itself, as it can, to the light of grace, than to shut it up because it cannot do all that it *might* do. So now, do what you will—you may rely on me. I will be a priest to you, if you will it ; or I will be a friend, and not a priest to you, if you prefer it. In either case, I will do all I can to help you to please God, and to be happy.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. S.

P.S.—How strange it is that people will always, on this subject, torment themselves and obscure it by that bugbear adjective "habitual"! As if one ought *never* to tell one's doctor the nature of one's aches and pains, out of fright lest such communications should become "habitual"! The only real question is this—"Have diseased souls any doctor at all?"

Whether, however, this sort of confession, in your case, would warrant me in advising you to go to Holy Communion is more than I can say until I had heard it. And, even then, my difficulty would be less as to the reality of your sorrow and your desire of amendment, than as to your faith in the blessed Sacrament, as the *channel* to you of God's pardon. If you doubt the power of the words said by the priest in absolution to convey pardon to you, why should you trust the words said by him in consecrating the Eucharist, "This is My Body," etc., to do it?

For indeed, my dearest child, what your soul needs is (1) pardon and peace, and (2) grace and edification; and these gifts are in God's hands to give as He pleases, not as *we* please; and He has been pleased to give them, through His commissioned ministers, in the positive ordinances of His Church.

Some of the following letters were written about this time; the first to the editor of the *Guardian*, the rest to various persons.

#### FASTING COMMUNION.

*To the Editor of the "Guardian."*

SIR,

May I trespass upon your columns for my own relief, at a time when, being disabled from writing many letters, I am bound to answer the same question put to me by various persons, in various circumstances? I beg to disclaim the least value for my advice, except for those who have exercised their discretion by consulting me.

I will take one as a representative case; it runs as follows:—

"We are two miles and a half from —; and there is only one late Celebration here at — once a month. Till I had an illness I walked to —, or —, every Sunday, for the early Celebration; but now the doctor forbids my doing so, at least for the winter. And if I fast till after the late Celebration I am unfit for work the next day. Do you think I might refresh myself early on the day of Communion? or must I give up my present work on that account?"

I venture to answer—

“The rule of the Catholic Church, laid down for East and West (which knows no exception except for persons at the time of death), is that the blessed Sacrament should be received ‘the first food of the day,’ therefore fasting.

“There is nothing *said* about this rule in the English Prayer-Book; because, evidently, it is just one of those things of fact which never was and never could be gainsaid, and about which, if *anything* was to be said, it would have been in the form of an intimation, in terms, that the rule is *not* binding on the English people.

“But no such declaration appears. Therefore, according to my judgment, the universal custom of the Church of Christ is binding on the children of the Church of England.

“Yet there are those among our priests who think that the absence of any confirmation of the allegiance due to the custom of fasting Communion, from the letter of the English Prayer-Book, leaves English communicants free to receive, fasting or not.

“With the greatest love and respect for some of those priests, I cannot so regard it; nor can I advise others so to regard it.

“But the present question seems rather to be this:—whether, the priest of your parish being responsible to God and the Church, and having deliberately deprived you of the *opportunity* of receiving the blessed Sacrament fasting, you are to go, for months together, without this Divine sustenance; or whether, under the special circumstances which you describe, and the clear evidence of the priest’s responsibility, you are to receive unfasting, and to cast all the weight of the irregularity on him, and on the Bishop who does not interfere on your behalf.

“I am disposed to think that, if you make it plain to the priest that, in refusing to celebrate in the early morning, he *forces* you to receive unfasting, against your conscience and the custom of the universal Church, you are committing a less irregular act, by receiving and throwing the responsibility upon the priest and the Bishop, than by depriving yourself or suffering him to deprive you of the food of your soul.

"In such a case I would recommend a light refreshment, without meat or eggs or butter, six hours before receiving."

JAMES SKINNER.

Newland, Great Malvern, November, 1873.

To —.

I will not enter now upon the old worn-out controversy of fasting or non-fasting Communion, further than to say that I carefully read dear —'s paper, which is like him—full of loving thought for weak bodies, but of very hazy and imperfect conceptions of canonical law. I have noted all his points, and after having worked up the whole subject as to facts, I mean to draw up a general statement of the Church's ruling by which *we* are bound. Meantime, let me say that there can be no question whatever but that *necessity* has been allowed, by canon, to prevail in favour of receiving unfasting; but that when you come to define what makes "necessity," all the difficulties arise. —'s cases only prove that great laxity is sometimes found in some quarters. There are hundreds of instances like hers in the Roman Communion which are no more good against the canonical law than the similar, or rather the more flagrant, cases amongst ourselves.

— is very indignant about calling it a "mortal sin" to receive unfasting. But he forgets that the sin is only "mortal" when it is done in contempt of the Church's doctrine of the Divine presence in the blessed Sacrament, and of her discipline in consequence of it. Well, is anybody prepared to deny that the *practice* of unfasting Communion came in, and holds its ground in this country, on any other basis than this contempt? And yet, if any one by chance should receive unfasting on the *opposite* ground—of greater faith, and greater discipline, and greater reverence—it would not be sin at all. But would it be necessity? For the generality, certainly, the habitual breakfast cannot be a necessity: for the sick there would be, probably (though not for *all* sick), the necessity for some food, if communions came late. But why should necessity be urged for the late Communion? Almost all



the mediæval canons enjoin the priesthood to minister to the sick at such hours as their necessities as to food require, so as to forbear forcing an unfasting reception.

To —.

I do not know whether you expect me to grant you a dispensation to eat before communicating, or to issue a direction to you never to communicate unfasting. But, obviously, I have no power to do either one or the other. If ever there was a case of "to his own master," etc., this is one; and so far as I can see, after fullest consideration, it *must* be left to the individual conscience, and to none other, to weigh the character of that "necessity" which compels a departure from the *mos universalis* of the Catholic Church of Christ.

You are distressed at infrequency of Holy Communion, but it is not due to your will, and He will make up for it in spiritual communion. We must accommodate ourselves to the law of the Church, not make the law of the Church suit our circumstances, and break it. At every spiritual communion for the next month take the Ascension as the starting-point for your thoughts. Think that you are already in heaven, because you are in Him. *Be* there rather than here; realize that your human nature has already triumphed. It is a fact: by imagination you realize it. Say, why am I overborne by this humanity? It has already triumphed in Him. Why should I doubt its being nourished? I will doubt no more. In this Sacrament I take part in all that He has gained for men; I will lay all my needs at His feet.

To —.

I feel deeply how much I have neglected you—except in prayer for you, which I think has seldom, if ever, been omitted. But I am more overborne than ever with work and anxiety, and I am less fit to endure. I am now more dead than alive, and I see no prospect of any rest *yet*; but *rest* is not for us here below, and we ought to be too thankful to be employed by God to minister to separate souls whom He loves, and to know that, in

spite of the gloom which envelops the Church visible throughout the world, He is training individuals rapidly, first one and then another, and moulding them, through and in the faith, against the great final struggle with the Antichrist, which is nearer every day.

I am due at Bath to preach on Thursday, the 11th, and am meditating an incursion on — and you on Friday, the 12th, for a few days. . . . I shall then have an opportunity for administering a *homily* to you upon the connection between "sloth and anger."

If you will only introduce that middle term of *self-will* into the problem, you will see how sloth grows; and how, having grown, it causes "inveteracy" in that loss of temper which is at once a consequence of it and a stimulant to it. Anger, after all, is but a form of the same root of evil, of which there are other six forms; and when once you catch hold of that root of *selfishness*, you can see, with a little penetration, how they all hang together and play into each other's hands. . . . God bless you ever.

#### TO THE SAME.

. . . By all means ask — to admit you into the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.

Remember, however, that such a tie, while it will immeasurably strengthen your hold upon the Divine mystery as your Rock and strength, and unspeakably help you to realize your oneness with the whole Body of Christ, living and departed, must also brace you up to more loyalty and more bravery and more self-restraint, obliging you to live more constantly in the Divine presence, and forcing you to turn every day and its occupations into occasions of honouring God. You will feel the responsibility of setting an example of devotion to the blessed Sacrament, as being—what indeed it is—devotion to the will of Jesus, in *all things*, great and small. . . .

To —.

Easter Eve.

Try and see, in all events of the week just closing, how they are our warning to us against placing our ideal of a Church, or

of personal safety, or of the way in which our salvation is to be wrought out, in things pleasant and smooth. See how there is nothing but the lesson of trial, persecution, hatred, failure, and all the elements most against success. Learn that we are safest when most conscious of having to endure suffering for His sake—suffering of intellect not satisfied, of imagination not gratified, of senses not indulged; suffering bodily and mental. There is nothing more hazardous than having things smooth and according to our own will. Apply this in detail to the circumstances of your life, inward and outward; learn that you must be content to do and bear everything that God wills for you; learn to quiet the impulses of the flesh when you are apt to be excited into self-approbation or self-pleasing, or condemning and judging others. See how our dear Lord dealt with those who brought charges against Him—the chief priests, when they charged Him with blasphemy, “What need we any further witness?” Conceive what it must have been to His mind, Very God—what the effect of those words must have been on Him, who was Truth itself—to be charged publicly with blasphemy. And yet He answered nothing. If we analyze His conduct before those three tribunals—Annas’, Caiaphas’, and Pilate’s—we find one witness against our *amour propre*, our desire to have our own estimate of truth asserted. His whole bearing convicts us of this dominant passion of ours, which *He* had to bear; He had, as it were, to mortify and subdue the glory which was in Him by nature in order to bear the punishment of our self-will. Follow out these thoughts in order to help you to humility in all things. So use the light you have. Who are we to desire a fraction of light? We leave what we have unused, and then clamour for more. Try to live up to the light you have—to keep grace, not to lose it; it is much easier to lose grace than to keep it, though we have such a liberal Giver. Instead of making progress, we too often go back, because self comes in. Try, my dear —, in all things to submit yourself; to watch the inner life of purity, and love, and patience, and faith, and hope, whereby we may approve ourselves to the Holy Ghost as belonging to the kingdom of God, which cometh not with observation.

There must be an external organization for the carrying out of God's designs ; but when we come to individual souls, it is their relation to Him which really makes the difference as to a soul going further from Him or coming nearer to Him. This is our consolation in perplexity and difficulties—now in these times when it seems as if the world were drawing to its close—that in spite of all outward trial, wars, and suffering, and all external signs and tokens, one thing never can be touched—the inner relation between the children and the Father—their absolute unreasoning trust, and that more and more as the end approaches and the kingdom grows which cometh not with observation.

Think of the risen life which you share with your risen Lord, and that that life is a life of perseverance. While you persevere that life is in you. And it is made up of separate acts. You cannot tell if you will persevere. You will if up to that time you persevere, and that depends on your faithfulness to grace in life. At the hour of death it is a supernatural gift ; but from now till then you have it in your own power, for perseverance depends on prayer. It is revealed to us in the fact that the disciples forsook our Lord because they had failed in prayer, " Could ye not watch with Me one hour ? " So your perseverance and mine depends on the diligent exercise of the *habit* of prayer.

To —.

If the Catholic faith requires us to believe in the Divine presence of the Second Person of the glorious Trinity, in His inseparable natures of God and Man, in the Holy Eucharist—by virtue of the operation of the Holy Ghost in the consecrating action—then the attitude of adoration towards that Presence follows necessarily—I will not say by the law of logic, but by the law of our being, which presupposes a worshipping instinct of love and fear. It is idle to attempt to formalize this proposition in set terms ; but it is worse—it is to my mind almost blasphemous (if it were not in itself so evidently the token of imperfect faith)—to limit and restrain it by miserable stammering negations. But I must forbear saying anything more, except to repeat that you had

better pray more and talk and complain less ; in your patience possess your soul ; that is, command yourself in the consciousness of the safety of your soul in the hands of God, "be the earth never so unquiet" and the raging of the heathen never so great. As *yet* your position is just what it has always been. . . . How long this may continue to be your portion, God knows. He made it for you as an individual ; you did not make it for yourself. It enters into your individual probation. Perhaps your salvation may hang upon your fidelity in passing through it according to His will. It is not by *our* "running," but by His "willing," that we are saved. He can save us without sacraments—ay, without the Church at all—if He sees fit to bring us into such sorrow as that by no fault of our own, and without our own faith and union (subjectively) with His Church failing, though sacraments and the Church itself should be visibly lost to our eyes. You remember what I said to you at Holy Communion at — one day, with your difficulties in my mind and in my heart : "They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the Mount Zion, which *cannot* be moved." There is the perfection of stability to the perplexed soul ; it *cannot* be moved, so long as it rests and waits and trusts in and on Him Who is to it Light and Truth and Joy and Salvation.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### LAST DAYS AT NEWLAND.

1873-1877.

"If singing breath or echoing chord  
To every hidden pang were given,  
What endless melodies were poured,  
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven !"

EARLY in 1873 the Vicar of Newland was obliged to submit to a sentence of exile and rest, and to leave England. From henceforth his life was to be a struggle, most pathetic to witness, against increasing physical weakness and suffering, though the mind remained as vigorous and ardent as ever. He was upheld by hope of restored health and strength, which did not leave him until nearly the end, and by frequent gleams of recovery. At this time the change and rest told at once on his health and appetite ; after a few days' visit to Cannes, and to Mentone, to revisit his old home of 1857-8, he settled himself with his wife, by the middle of March, at San Remo, which was only then beginning to grow into a place of English resort. Here they spent many happy weeks full of repose and of hope.

Mr. Skinner interested himself deeply in an English girl who was ill in the hotel where he was staying,\* and whose musical talents were, after her recovery, a great source of pleasure and amusement, and almost all expeditions were made with her and with her companion friend. It always seemed as though his own great loss, instead of shutting his heart, had opened it, and that the thought of the little grave at home had made him especially tender to sick girls.

You have asked me to try and recall that time at San Remo (one of the friends writes), but our days were so simple and uniform that there is not much to tell. You know what a power our friend had of making others happy in his company; and I think this proceeded in a very remarkable manner from the real love with which his heart was filled. In him *kindness* was swallowed up by love. We never thought of him as *kind*, which always seems to imply a certain effort and self-denial, but he made us feel that his love and interest in those he cared for was so real that they were always a delight to him, and that the self-denial to him would be *not* to help them or give them pleasure. There was nothing about us too little to be an interest to him, or a source of endless playful comment. "The prairie bird," he used to call Margaret, whose wild, fresh ways amused him. Every day our donkeys, Piccina and Rattina, appeared under the pepper tree in front of the hotel, and, led by little Giuseppe, accompanied us in our mountain expeditions, to be used when required as legs. We used to amuse ourselves occasionally by

\* September 25, 1883.—Since the above words were written, and while these sheets are passing through the press, she too, having greatly overtaxed her strength by work amongst the London poor, has passed away,—Margaret Leighton, youngest child of the late Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Bart. On September 11 she dictated a few lines, saying: "I long to be by your side, as I knew you were going through that happy time at San Remo. A bad turn in this illness seems to bring me very near the brink of the land where that dear friend is gone." On September 14 she was at Rest.

trying to alarm our friend for our safety, and still seem to hear his "my dear child, how you do frighten me!" at flying leaps from a bank to the donkey's back. Then there were quiet mornings on the olive terraces, among the luxuriant blossoms of the gladiolus. He had always a book in his pocket, generally a small volume of Drexelius, from which he used to read to us, translating as he went along, and these readings often led to grave talk. And the evenings, how pleasant they were in that little sitting-room *al terzo*, which his dear wife had made homelike. It became a home to us also. I remember one evening especially, when M——, who had been dining out, came in with her hands full of roses which she had filled with glow-worms. Then, when the days grew longer, we sometimes spent our evenings in the garden; I never see the almond tree in blossom against a blue sky without thinking of that garden.

We spent Easter at San Remo. There was a star which used to go up with the moon; and I remember we stayed out long after dark on Easter Sunday, watching the two "lines of level light" that lay near each other, sparkling and shimmering from the horizon to the shore. I have never seen the same effect since.

Mr. Skinner always Celebrated himself on Sunday and Saints' days; and after the Creed gave us a short extempore address, generally on the Gospel. We went with him for about a week to Pegli, and then to Milan, where it was a great pleasure to him to show us the Duomo, which we had never seen before.

From Milan Mr. Skinner and his friends went to Stresa on Lago Maggiore, where he seemed to get better every day, and where he enjoyed seeing his friend Bishop Nixon, who had a lovely villa outside the town. The Rev. F. Oxenham and his brother joined them at Stresa, and with them made a delightful four days' trip to Macugnaga, and through the Val Anasasca. Mr. Skinner was the life of the party, full of fun and of delight in the pleasures of the excursion, pretending to be the "padre" of his "two



sons and three daughters." In June they went to Monte Generoso, where the bracing air exactly suited him, and where he had the pleasure of a visit from the late Charles Harris, Bishop of Gibraltar, and his sister-in-law, Mrs. Monsell of Clewer, both dear friends. There the companions of many weeks parted from him and his wife, but only for a time; his friendship for them was constant, tender, and unchanging for the eight years and a half that remained to him of life.

From Monte Generoso the husband and wife went, in July, alone to Pontresina.

O, what a delightful journey we had from Mendrisio (she wrote), sleeping at Chiavenna, and driving in an *einspänner* from thence to Pontresina, with an intelligent, amusing driver, and through a magnificent country in lovely weather. But our happiness was terribly clouded over as we entered S. Moritz. It was full of English, and we were stopped by some friend, who told us that the English papers had just brought the news of the fatal accident to Bishop Wilberforce. The rest of our drive was a sad one indeed. The tidings have been a shock to my dear husband which he has been long in recovering from.

He writes to a friend :

Hotel Rosegg, Pontresina, St. Bartholomew's Day, 1873.

Too long a time has elapsed since I acknowledged your welcome notes. . . . But I am unequal to much writing, and find myself still obliged to give all I can to the "Synopsis." The almost fierce tone of — against the precious medicine of confession, led on by the popular clamour which — should be the first to allay, has compelled me to write a much longer and different preface from what I had ever purposed.\* . . .

God is over all truth, and especially over His own gifts, and men can really "do nothing against the truth, but for the truth;"

\* It was never finished. See above, p. 283.

so that the assaults which begin from ignorance and hostility, separately or in combination, are sure to end in the greater confirmation of the blessings assaulted. Meantime, the assaulters bring their own souls into grievous danger, and this is the thought which saddens the heart, that — should rush into such risks, for their own souls and the souls of those who trust them, by their attacks, almost blindfold, upon sacred things which the whole and undivided Church has ever jealously guarded and retained. As for ourselves in England, so for you even more in Ireland, that is what I feel in this day of crisis or judgment. And I can suggest nothing but *prayer* and an entire surrender of the issue to God, beseeching Him to protect — from themselves (who are their worst enemies, by reason of the ignorance and weakness and fear of man which are in them), and to preserve us, as individuals, from all complicity, in thought, word, or act, with heresy or contempt of the Catholic faith and worship.

Time is everything. If God will but, by His Spirit, nerve the Irish Bishops, or any number of them, to veto every one of those mad attempts to untheologize (if I may coin a word) the language of theology upon the profound mysteries of our religion, the Irish Church may not only yet be saved, but may be purged so as to become the mother of many saints in a long future of blessing to the land. If otherwise, she will but fulfil that just law of retributive justice which cannot be set aside. St. Augustine, somewhere, enumerating the greatest curses of a land, reckons two, among others, which I remember—(1) the people left without discipline; (2) the Bishops accustomed to negligence. We are, at least, in great danger of these two evils, and of their consequences.

We are off to-morrow across the Bernina to the Valtelline, and then over the Stelvio to the Tyrol. We shall (D.V.) reach Innsbrück on Friday, and shall remain there a few days, in order to rest, and to see, perhaps, the Brixlegg Passion Play. Thence we proceed to England by easy stages. I am better, thank God, but I am quite unfit for work, and dread the prospect of separating myself from it, more than I can say.

—’s account of the dearest Bishop of Winchester’s last

Sunday with them was very interesting and precious to me. Of course, his treatment of the "ninety and nine" was mystical; he did not mean it to be taken for the first and literal interpretation. Have you forgotten that I read to you, in some of our walks at San Remo, a passage from the "Angel Book" of Drexelius, quoting St. Hilary and St. Bridget (after St. Ambrose), and giving precisely that explanation, or rather application, which the Bishop gave? I quote the "Horologium" of Drexelius:—"Mediolanensis Præsul Ambrosius quosdam sentire ait numerum Angelorum nonagies novies majorem esse omni numero hominum, idque confirmari è Capite XV. S. Lucae, ubi de Pastore sermo qui 99 oves deserit; ut errabundam unicam reperiat: ita Christus, ajunt, Angelos deseruit, et in hanc incultissimum eremum demigravit, ut humanum genus ab errore revocaret. Ita sentit D. Hilarius et S. Brigita."

The bracing climate of the Engadine was of much use to Mr. Skinner, and after a tour in the Tyrol he returned to England, and early in November was settled once more in his beloved home. Then again the accounts of his health began to vary.

The cold and damp of the last few days have reduced me to my old state of nervous weakness and unfitness (he says, shortly after his return). I feel terribly disheartened at my weakness. God help me, and bring me meekly to bow to His will.

In December he says—

I am up to very little writing, beyond what falls to me of necessity, which is no small share. And I have been very seedy, from time to time, and up to nothing. On the whole, however, I am very thankful to be no worse; and as I rest mostly on alternate mornings, I manage to "get along."

So he struggled on, until the end of January, 1874, when Canon King and the Rev. F. Eichbaum came to the Warden's Lodge to arrange about setting on foot the scheme

of a Clergy House of Rest, which had long been anxiously desired by Mr. Skinner. But he took cold while standing about examining the house, and for many weeks was entirely laid up by a severe and suffering attack of bronchitis, the worst that he had had for years. Yet he rallied sufficiently to begin work again in the middle of Lent, preaching on March 15, sitting in the pulpit, and giving instructions after Evensong on week-days. "My Lents are over," he said one day; he gave the Three Hours' Meditation on Good Friday, but it was for the last time.

Father Benson writes to him of the "Synopsis," at which he worked whenever he had time or strength for it:

Cowley St. John, March 30, 1874.

MY DEAR SKINNER,

I have both of your letters—many thanks. Your "Synopsis" will be very valuable. It must have taken a vast amount of labour to work it out, and the chronological table of authorities is most useful. A few lines of remark—I will not say to each name, but to those which you are yourself most familiar with—expressing what school of casuistry the writer belonged to, would be a very great help in letting people know what they had to look for in his writings. Of course, this could not be done for all the names by any one man; but if it was only done for those which you know readily, it would be a great help.

I tremble at the idea of a course of lectures, all the more for its being such a short one. What to say in six lectures I really do not know, but I have a programme put into my hands which Wood drew up. As for books, I really grieve to say they are names to me and nothing more. I never get any time for reading. You speak of my work. It is a great mercy to have strength to go on, but although there is not a great many years' difference between us, nevertheless my work is only the reaping of the work done by yourself and others a few years before I began. I hope

you will have health restored for much work, although it may be of a cloistered student character. We want some men to teach us something not altogether impromptu.

May all the blessings of this season be abundantly vouchsafed to you. Bodily weakness is a great gift to the soul for Passion-tide. In health we may think about the Passion, but in weakness of body we become absorbed into it to live by its power.

Yours affectionately,

R. M. BENSON.

To Canon Carter Mr. Skinner writes as to the possibility of a concordat upon matters of ritual :

Newland, April 16, 1874.

MY DEAREST CARTER,

Dr. Pusey has sent me your letter to him, but I must abstain just now from the general question, as I have only time to reply to the circular, and to state what I, for one, would be content with as a "standard of ritual."

But I venture to differ from the suggestion which has occurred to your far better balanced mind, with, therefore, the greatest mistrust of my own. I mean your proposition of *two* categories of ritual: one "absolutely required," and the other "dependent on the sympathies of congregations." The second category—would it not be a confession of non-essential and comparatively unimportant things, of which the Bishops might say with reason, "Well, if you admit that these things are to be left dependent on the people's tastes, you admit they involve very little; and therefore we will cut them off altogether"?

My own view is, that ritual is not *absolutely*, in any sense, of the *essence* of worship; though constituted as men are, they can hardly worship together without it.

I should think it better to put all ritual on the same footing; and to say, generally, that as we must have *some* ritual, and as there *is* a Catholic ritual, which the use of the Christian Church has sanctified, it is more according to the mind of the English Church to use that which all Christendom has authorized, than to

*invent* one of her own. All ritual which the Church has authorized by use is the expression of the faith of the Church. There is nothing which does not teach something. The importance, therefore, of the matters of faith expressed is the measure of the importance of the ritual which expresses it.

I suppose there is *nothing* important for itself, and nothing unimportant which expresses the faith ; so that *anything* which should be left "dependent upon the sympathies of congregations" ought to be, or might be, wholly excluded?

I, for one, would rather say to the Bishops, "Here, my Lords, is the minimum of ritual to which, I believe, the English Church is entitled. I am quite content to be restrained within that minimum, until a competent authority shall enforce a uniform order of worship everywhere. If your Lordships will concede this claim to me, I will pledge myself not only not to go beyond it, but to submit to your fatherly counsel, in all questions which may arise between me and my congregation, as to the *time* and *manner* of introducing it, for the first time, in our common worship."

Then the ritual with which I would be content would be that generally laid down as really "lawful" by the judgments of Sir R. Phillimore, based upon the First Book of Edward VI. These, I think, include—

1. The eastward position.
- 2, The vestments (priest and altar).
3. The lights.
4. The mixed chalice.
5. The wafer bread.

I will write to you a separate letter on the great general question.

Ever affectionately yours,  
JAMES SKINNER.

To a friend who had asked for information as to books of plain teaching on the Apostolical Succession, he writes :

Newland, April 28, 1874.

. . . Mr. Perceval, your relation, wrote a capital tract, or little book rather, upon the "Apostolical Succession," which, for popular purposes, I have never seen superseded.

Ask — to let your cousin read Hugh James Rose's sermons on "The Commission of the Clergy," preached before the University of Cambridge in 1826. Sermon II. is to her point, and in the Appendix, No. VI., there is an analysis of Courayer's book which will interest her much.

If — has the works of Jones of Nayland, in the fourth volume is his "Essay on the Church," which is invaluable.

As the summer advanced Mr. Skinner revived, and was able to conduct two priests' Retreats—one at the Clergy House of Rest at Malvern Link, which was now fairly afloat, and of which he was honorary Warden ; the other at Stratford-on-Avon. In August he went for a fortnight to friends in Ireland, and was able, on his return, to get fairly through his work. He writes in September :

I have never ceased to consider how wonderfully kind all my Irish friends have been, at your instigation, who are the kindest of all. But, unfortunately, this consideration had no effect whatsoever upon the intruders upon my time in the form of persons and letters, which have, literally, never ceased since I entered the house.

The numbers of men and women and priests and candidates for orders who want help seems to be increasing, if I may judge from those who frequent so unworthy an "oracle" as myself, and the programme of our action, in preparing for our defence in the coming crisis, occupies much thought and time.

Alas ! a sharp attack of bronchitis in December brought a positive veto from his doctor against his venturing to encounter an English spring, but he was allowed to remain

at home until February, 1875, and writes to a friend on Christmas Day, 1874 :

Thank God for His past and undeserved mercies ! I was able to celebrate the early Communion, and to sing it chorally. O, it was so bright and beautiful ; the altar and chancel gorgeous with light and flowers and all sweet tokens of joy. The little choir took me quite by surprise ; I had not expected to be able to sing ; but they were ready and in full force, and so I, too gratefully, led the way. We had sixty-two communicants at that early hour, and in the slush of mixed frost and thaw and snow-covered roads. I was very tired ; but nevertheless preached after Mattins, and I have been to Evensong, and sang the office, besides taking a "lusty" share in the carols. It has been an unspeakable grace of God to me, to grant me, contrary to all expectation, such a blessed Christmas Day. I only hope and pray, my dearest —, that He has been gracious to you, if not exactly in like manner, yet in equal, if not greater power, by manifesting His precious love to your soul, through silent and hidden tokens of His peace, conveyed (it may be) all the more deeply because with so little outward demonstration or cognizance of the natural sense. The Lord is not "bound," even by what most helps us.

What you have missed by missing a sight of Andilly ! I am disposed to quarrel with your estimate of the Spanish scholastic learning created and sustained at Alcala and Salamanca.

The next letter is from Cannes :

February 21, 1875.

I have been very unwell ever since my arrival here. Never has there been known, at least for twenty years, such a severe season. On this side Marseilles, which is usually the introduction into "paradise," we entered a country covered with snow. . . . I am more and more out of humour with Cannes. Snow and hail and rain and mistral and sunless days out of doors, while within are nothing but draughts and chills, and miserable *bois* which will not burn.



So the husband and wife went to Hyères, which suited him well, and after a tour in the Pyrenees returned home in June.\*

Newland, June 9, 1875.

I have been in England just a week, but most of it in London, contending with furious suns and still more piercing east winds, and rushing about on various necessary labours ; so that I felt disposed to say, what I could not help thinking was true, that my absence had done nothing for me in the way of strength and power. I got home here on Friday night, all alone, and felt very sad and melancholy, in spite of the joy of returning to my precious church and people. . . . I could hardly get through my work on Sunday ; but I Celebrated and preached, and again did so yesterday, and I am getting straight.

I remember you and Ireland in my daily prayers, and especially that grand Christian gentle prelate, the Archbishop of Dublin, whom I saw, to my heart's satisfaction, for a really good visit when I was in town, and who kindly condescended to talk with me of what hangs heaviest on his dear large heart. He has been most mercifully led, by the Holy Ghost, to stand as St. Athanasius would have stood in his place.

The summer of 1875 was fine and hot, and was a time of rest and blessing at Newland. Never, perhaps, had the vicar's preaching been more full of deep instruction, and never had all outward things been more lovely. Once more, as in past days, friends gathered around him—the young, in whom he delighted, and others with whom, in the summer evenings when work was done, there were long talks, both gay and grave, out of doors or in the conservatory. They could hardly be without fruit in the future to those whom unconsciously he taught.

But as soon as the autumn and early winter set in he

\* His daughter-nieces had both married.

fell back again, and Dr. Andrew Clark thought so seriously of his case that he ordered him to leave England as soon as possible, and he had to submit to another winter and spring of banishment and wandering ; first at Mentone and Rapallo, and afterwards at Spezia, Pisa, and Florence. He just held his own during this time ; always bright and ready to find enjoyment, though anything requiring exertion was a difficulty to him. At Spezia almost all our days were spent in a boat on the gulf, and this suited him, and gave him strength for the time, so that he could enjoy strolls about the shores above Lerici and San Terenzo, and was able to Celebrate on Sundays and holy days, never omitting his little instruction after the Creed, although only given to two or three.

April and May at Florence was also a happy time, in apartments in the Via Montebello, where Mr. Skinner greatly enjoyed the rest from hotels and *tables d'hôte*, and the family life, with daily drives in the neighbourhood, to Fiesole, or Lorenzo de' Medici's Villa, or the Certosa, all of which he made delightful to the little circle of friends who were continually together.

Early in June, 1876, he was again at Newland, when his wife wrote :

I really think he is much the same as when we parted from you, every now and then seeming unfit for anything, so feeble, no appetite, depressed, and coughing a good deal. Then he will pick up again, and be another man, and seem so much better. But at best he is not good for much, and I certainly think that I never saw him, at this time of year, so poorly as he is now. As to our future, we seldom discuss it.

He did not, of course, mend as the autumn advanced,

although working and preaching through the summer ; and now thought it right to consult his Bishop on the question of resigning his living, as it seemed plain that he could never again hope to work through a winter at Newland. The Bishop of Worcester was, as ever, most kind and fatherly, strongly deprecating the project of resignation, and saying that so easy a post as Newland seemed exactly suited to one in feeble health, since he, the Bishop, was quite prepared to give leave of absence during the winter months, knowing that the care of the parish would be amply provided for.

Mr. Skinner returned from his interview with Bishop Philpot greatly cheered, and hoping that he might be permitted to remain in his beloved home, but the trustees of the almshouses refused to give leave of absence for the winter, and it was therefore necessary that he should either resign his wardenship, or spend the winter in England. In this perplexity, he was induced to try the effect of Turkish baths at Bristol for a fortnight, and the benefit he received was at first so great that he was full of hope that it might please God to restore him to health. The apparent spring towards recovery was only temporary ; he spent Advent and Christmas for the last time in the home and the church which he had formed ; but it was a sorrowful time, the last effort of a strong heart to work with failing strength in a climate unfit for him in winter. Those who watched the struggle often felt as though he must faint and die at the very foot of the altar ; and only his indomitable spirit enabled him to get through the services which he undertook. In February, 1877, a few weeks' leave enabled him again to try the baths at Bristol, and there,

cut off from all he most valued, he spent Lent and Easter, a trying time, although brightened by the constant and devoted kindness of Archdeacon and Mrs. Norris. It was not without its fruits, even for others. "I think I learned more from him, in some ways, than from any other clergyman," was said after his death by one who often came to visit a friend who was with him at Bristol. "Do you not remember how, when dusk came on, he used to close his book, and join in our conversation? He said things then which I have never forgotten."

On Easter Eve, 1877, he wrote to an invalid friend :

I deeply sympathize with you in all the *apparent* loss, the loss in external brightness and consciousness of joy in outward things, which this discipline entails (perhaps you do know that in my own little measure, I have had *something* of the same kind to go through this Lent and Easter, so that I can have "compassion"); but what is our loss in such respects in the balance over *against* the unnumbered respects in which we are gainers through *His* sacrament of obedience?

Yet a few days more of hope and brightness were granted to him in his home. He returned there in April, and for about a month made a quick strange rally, preaching with all his old force: appetite and sleep returned, and with them strength and energy. There was one last blessed Ascension Day in his church, but the improvement did not continue so as to give him a prospect of spending any winter at Newland, and nothing remained for him but to resign his post. He went to London to consult two eminent physicians.

I was not a little anxious (his wife wrote in June) to hear the doctors' report of him. On the whole it was certainly satis-

factory, although their verdict—namely, that he *must* rest from work for a while, and that he *must not*, positively, be here for the winter—means, without doubt, that our days at this sweet, blessed home are numbered. I am looking it all in the face now, and know it must be.

Amongst those who had been the most anxious that this should be averted, was Dr. Pusey, who strongly pressed upon his friend the duty of appealing to the trustees to grant the winter's leave of absence, which the Bishop had expressed his willingness to give.

I hoped (Dr. Pusey wrote) that so appealed to they would not have deprived you of your home. Do you remember that outburst of Meg Merrilies to Bertram, who had deprived her tribe of their home? I ever thought it very eloquent and touching. It was done *then*. I wish there were a Meg Merrilies to say it to the trustees before it is done.

He now came forward to soften, if possible, the pain of leaving Newland by offering his friend a post which it was hoped he might still have health to fill, that of Chaplain to the Convalescent Hospital, near Ascot. Dr. Pusey wrote to a friend of Mr. Skinner :

Christ Church, Oxford, May 13, 1877.

I have the greatest value and respect and love for Mr. Skinner. . . . But alas! there is no house fit for him at Ascot. . . . The pines make it a wonderful air, and the ground is very dry, but there is no house for one accustomed to the thick walls at Newland and its beautiful view. It is but half finished. In fact, there is but one beautiful ward, an unfinished chapel, and rooms for the Sisters ; but splendid capacities. It seems a pity to build a convalescent home elsewhere, while there are such capacities here. The pines make Arcachon and Bournemouth what they are ; Bournemouth, the best place on our southern coast.

Later he writes to the same friend :

I sent your former letter to M. E. Bertha,\* but to the wrong direction.

I cannot doubt but that she would be delighted with the plan, only it seems *too good to be realized*. The difficulty is about the house. . . . But *this is the only hindrance*. A new house takes, I fear, time to dry.

Dr. Pusey was, with his characteristic hopefulness, so anxious that Mr. Skinner should have the benefit of the healthy air of Ascot, and the hospital the benefit of his services, that the difficulty as to a house was overcome.

In another letter he says—

Everything helps everything. The more efficient the present work is, the more attractive it will be. I do not doubt that dear Mr. Skinner, if God continues him to us, will be of the greatest use. I hope that — will be able to obtain for us subscribers who will enable us to continue the charity to the crowded East End poor, who have no other friends, yet need change of air more than we in our ailments, because the air they habitually live in is bad. . . .

I am thankful to hear that dear J. Skinner is better. I hope he will look resolutely to whatever good work God may have in store for him, and shut his eyes resolutely on Newland. He could not have stayed there without the trustees' leave,† and if he had stayed there‡ he would have died.

On July 4 Mr. Skinner sent in his resignation as Warden of the almshouses to the trustees, arranging to resign his parish and to leave Newland at Michaelmas. One work he had the happiness of completing during these last months—the painting of his church in fresco.

\* Superior of the Sisters working at the Ascot Convalescent Home.

† Of absence for winter, which was required, as well as the Bishop's.

‡ *i.e.* during the winter.

Begun years ago, on the east wall, in memory of his child, it had been gradually continued, as offerings were made for the purpose, until, by Michaelmas, the whole of the nave as well as the chancel was completed, and carried out on a scheme which was full of instruction as well as delight to the eye. It is impossible here to describe the loving and reverent care with which each detail has been worked out; the church stands alone in England in this respect, and in the teaching conveyed by its walls to the unlearned. But it may just be said that on the north side of the nave are represented the corporal works of mercy, and our Lord's miracles of mercy in the arcade above, each one of the latter having a relation to the fresco beneath it. Thus, the marriage at Cana of Galilee is above the fresco representing "giving drink to the thirsty," and the raising of Lazarus above the representation of "burying the dead."

On the south side, the parables of the kingdom of heaven are represented in the upper space, and the Beatitudes in the lower arcade; for instance, Esther before Ahasuerus for "Blessed are the peacemakers," the Annunciation for "Blessed are the pure in heart."

Every moment that could be spared during these months of preparation for departure was spent by the Warden either in church, superintending the execution of the last frescoes, or wandering slowly through the precincts of the almshouses, as though taking farewell of each stone and each foot of ground, often resting on the seat under the elm tree that shadows his child's grave. There he was wont to talk of her and of her deathbed to a friend, and to express his thankfulness to God for her blessed rest. Only once he almost broke down when watching his wife at a little

distance amongst her flowers, and said, "We must try and get her a little garden wherever we go."

It is difficult for any who loved him to dwell on those last days, when much of anxiety and wearing trials combined with the sorrow of leaving his home to break down what remained to him of bodily strength. "I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are true, and that Thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled," he had taken as his special text when his daughter died; and now he steadfastly set his heart to consider the same, and to take all sorrows as tokens of a Father's love.

But the frail earthly tabernacle could not but suffer, and he never recovered the effects of special trials at this time. Until the middle of July he continued to preach on Sundays; then, under a strain of mental anxiety, hæmorrhage from the lungs came on, and he never preached again until the Sunday before he left Newland. The following extracts from his letters will best give the history of those last days:—

June, 1877.

I have made up my mind to bear the pang of separation entirely from this place at Michaelmas. . . . I suppose that I shall have no choice but, being spared, to spend the winter abroad. All being well, I should, I suppose, return to England about June of next year; and it would then be an unspeakable joy to me to feel that I had anything to give, in giving my poor services, such as they are, to the work at Ascot. My doctor has assured me that of all climates in England of which he has any experience, there is not one more suited to my especial infirmities than Ascot. This has greatly strengthened and encouraged me to make up my mind. If it be God's will to call me to this service at Ascot (and I am comforted by the thought that both the necessity for my going hence and the suggestion of coming thither are from Him), it *may*



also be His will to restore me to some renewed vigour, that I may do something for Him, there, before I die."

I do not see what the Bishop of — means, quite, by withdrawing from the Synod, unless it is the prelude to withdrawing from the Church. His withdrawal from the *Synod*\* can but weaken the cause he would serve; unless he *means* to weaken the whole situation by saying "it is untenable." If he means to abide a Bishop of the Irish Church, the Synod wants his voice and his vote, all day and every day, while it is sitting.

I fail to understand the logical consistency of —'s advice to every lay person who *can* do so, to leave Ireland, as a home, on account of Irish Church difficulties. . . . If the fact be so, that there is no longer the Irish Church left to Ireland, of course I understand it at once. But if the Church is still left to the country, albeit under great straits and some perils, and still he advises every one who can to get away, in order to escape from the Church's trials, I am at a loss to know where this advice will stop. *We* should all have to get out of England, for the same reason, though in a varying degree; and why not also the good old Italian and French and German Catholics, out of Italy, France, and Germany? What would be *the* point, in reaching difficulties and perils, at which each soul who could escape would be bound to pause, and say, "This stage has been reached, and I must leave my country and my people?"

July 2, 1877.

Since Wednesday of last week I have been driven to spend most of my time in bed. I have not been so prostrated by my chronic sickness for some years. I fear, therefore, that I cannot get to Ascot quite yet, so I can only hope that both the dear Doctor and you will abide there sufficiently long to enable me to be sure of seeing you both. . . . I am afraid I can write no more than to say how deeply grateful I am to the dear Doctor and to you for all your thought of me. But I wish, above all, that God's

\* In Ireland.

honour and His poor shall be the first thought, and of me no thought at all, except in so far as I may possibly assist to that end.

It will never do to build for me. Build for the poor, as much as you like, but not for me, except for their sake and to their good. All is so uncertain. Let us leave all with God. Let us pray to be kept from marring any good and gracious work by thoughts of self.

July 19, 1877.

Yesterday we entered on the thirtieth year of our dear married life; and we felt that God is even more gracious to us in the trials of the end, than in the sweetness of the beginning.

It has been, all through, a blessed season of patient and long-suffering love and sweetness at His blessed hands; He has made our married life more and more real to us, as a sacramental figure of our ineffable union with Himself, in His Incarnate Son. What a joy this is! and that we are still preserved to each other to go on together, whither He shall call. How it helps us to bear the blessed cross which He sends with His love!

Has the dear Doctor seen Beresford Hope's appeal? \* I should like to know what he thinks of its consistency with the Devon petition, which has received 41,200 signatures.

I enclose Mr. Hope's letter to me, and my reply to it.

I Celebrated (D.G.) this morning, and also on Tuesday last; but I am *very* feeble, and am torn with cough in the late nights and early morning.

August 30, 1877.

I have not preached or Celebrated, or even occupied my stall, for five weeks. I am such a wreck. But, please God, when I am *free* from this dearest tie of my life (next to my wife) I shall be better! And I live now, in more hope of the joy of being with E. B. P. and *his* work at Ascot.

\* It was signed by several influential names amongst the clergy, binding themselves not to use certain points of ritual, including vestments. Dr. Pusey's answer, on being shown the document, was, "I could no more sign it than Skinner could."

Mr. Skinner preached, for the last time in his life, at his own church on Sunday, September 23. He Celebrated on the following Saturday, Michaelmas Day, and left Malvern for London on the same day, with his wife. She wrote to a friend on the journey :

I will try and write you a scrap to post at Reading. We have really left Newland now, and I am thankful it is *over*; rest and repose are what we both need now. Oh, what it all has been no words can tell! But it is over now. We had a blessed refreshment this morning at that dear, dear altar, and it seemed quite to restore me after a *very* bad night, he coughing half the night, and both of us too tired and too sad to sleep. But we were wonderfully strengthened this morning, and have been better ever since. It was most trying and touching at the time, however, and I thought my dear husband *must* break down. The church looked like Easter morning, so full, and all decorated for the festival; seventy-seven received, besides others present who did not receive, and the pensioners' seats were full. It was a striking sight, which I shall never, never forget. Yesterday, after Litany, to which all the pensioners came, except Barnes, who is dying, the dear Warden gave them a parting address. Every one was weeping, some of them sobbing, and *he* with much difficulty from emotion was hardly able to articulate. But such words! Oh, if you could have heard them and taken them down. Then when he had given them his blessing, he stood on the doorstep, and shook hands with each one as they came out. I don't think the *first* Warden will ever be forgotten. Dear old Susan, it is indeed sad to see her. She is broken-hearted at losing us. She *would* have us breakfast at the lodge this morning, and managed so well for us, borrowing easy-chairs from Sister Matilda and all that was necessary for our comfort, so we had our last meal there this morning. The weather is perfect, and Newland was in full beauty this morning, the garden a blaze of colour. Our last act was to go together to the dear grave. O, how peaceful and lovely it looked! I am sure that gratitude was the feeling which most

filled our hearts. You were not forgotten by us in church ; would that you could have been with us.

The Chantry, Ipswich, October 4, 1877.

Just one line (the husband writes) to say I am arrived here. I came last night, alas ! without my darling, who has gone to be with her father at Middleton. I never saw her so thoroughly prostrate ; it made my heart ache to look at her. And I—well, I am no better ; but I think, somehow, I have been enabled to keep up with less cost of suffering.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### ASCOT CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL.

1877—1879.

“For He who once, a Heavenly Child,  
Came to a world not clad in bright  
Spring-blossoms, nor in gay leaves dight,  
But to its winter bleak and wild,

“To faithful hearts comes evermore,  
When grief has touched with finger sere  
The glories of life's earlier year,  
As never He had come before.”

IN the sorrow of leaving Newland, it had been a consolation to Mr. Skinner to look forward, if it should so please God, to helping Dr. Pusey in his work for the poor at Ascot. A certain number of services were already given at the hospital by a clergyman in the neighbourhood, and it was arranged that Mr. Skinner should supplement these according as health permitted. Here he spent the last four summers of his life, under the same roof with his venerable friend. Alas! Dr. Pusey's sanguine hopes and expectation that the air at Ascot would restore him to health were not fulfilled, nor would his doctors even allow him to attempt a winter in its keen air.

He spent the winter of 1877-78 at Hyères and Cannes ;

and his wife writes at this time of his suffering from "racking cough both day and night, making no way at all. He is so feeble, I feel sadly out of heart sometimes, but try to hope on, and practise patience."

The extracts which follow of letters from him and from Dr. Pusey will best tell the story of the last years.

To a friend he writes :

Hyères, January 2, 1878.

It is impossible for me to put off any longer expressing, with my own hand, how much you have been in my prayers all this holy tide, and how earnest is my hope that it may please God to restore you to some degree of health and strength, if it be His will, for the greater enjoyment (as *we* count it) of His other gifts. Sickness and weakness are His gifts as much as health and strength : it may be lawful to hope for the latter if it be His will ; but it is *most acceptable* to be content—yes, even to rejoice—in the former if the latter be denied. I have volumes to say to you on this head, and a very fountain of comfort to which I would fain direct you, but I must yet ask you to task your dear patience a little further. I am *never* yet able to write without suffering. But it is all with the Blessed God, who orders the life of His servants, not as *they* will, but as He wills.

Good Friday, 1878.

I must just put in a line of love and blessing on this, in one sense the saddest, and in another the most glorious, day in all the year, as this year it synchronizes with the day of your birth. May all the glory of the day at which the angels eternally rejoice be present to bless and comfort you, and to sweeten all the sadness of it wherewith it may please God to bring you nearer to Himself through suffering. I think one learns by experience that whatever helps us to patience and humility contributes more to our spending Good Friday well, than any flood of "opportunities" and "privileges" in outward things. You are always in my thoughts and

prayers, as a disciple in the school of patience, wherein I, too, have need to be a more diligent scholar.

*Expectans expectavi* should be our daily "words to take with us." God give to you and me this spirit, more and more. I have been sorely troubled lately, for my dearest brother's sake, and all his dear ones, who are so loving and united. But God will bless it \* to them all, I know.

Dr. Pusey writes in February, 1878 :

God seems to be gathering the wheat into His garner so fast among those whom one knows, that one can anticipate nothing about dear Mr. Skinner. My great hope is in his illness. For those are called away whom one did not expect, and those who are not strong hang on. Five whom I know well have been called away since Christmas, and now we are uneasy about dear good Sir William.†

Later on he says :

I am thankful to hear the improved account of dear Mr. Skinner. As for his infirm health, it is the very thing which, in God's providence, gave him to us. Had he been in better health, he would have been in active work elsewhere. The only thing he has to be careful about is not to do too much. Mr. Roberts can still do whatever he does now, and dear Mr. Skinner can supplement it with whatever God enables him to do. So I hope he will put that worry aside, and in the words of the hymn—

"Do the little I can do,  
And leave the rest to Thee."

It is an understood thing that the house is his when, and as long as, he can use it.

In March Mr. Skinner went to Cannes, where he had another attack of hæmorrhage from the lungs. He writes :

\* The death of Mr. Charles Skinner's son, Edgar, who was killed by a fall from his horse.

† The late Right Hon. Sir William Heathcote.

Cannes, May 21, 1878.

My wife has said how ill I have been again, so no more of that. My doctor says I shall (D.V.) come right, but it will be the work of a long time and great patience ; so I take up my parable and say, "As for me, I will abide patiently upon the Lord, for in Him is my trust." There is no such cure as that.

However, my doctor has quite resolved it for me, that if I am alive, I *must* go abroad again for the winter.

The mind, as is natural with so corruptible and corrupt a weight upon it, is good for very little. But I try to keep up my heart, and to hope on, relying on the unfailing mercy and love of our dearest Lord. I *know*, that if it be His blessed will, and for the good of any who are dear in His sight, He will use me for His purposes, and strengthen me for His use ; if otherwise, He has other ends for me, which He will accomplish in His own way. And so I abide in Him, and leave the issue where alone it is safe.

I never felt myself, before, how *truly* one is but a pilgrim passing by in this shifting and uncertain world, and how good it is so to feel and so to be.

In July, 1878, Dr. Pusey had arrived at Ascot for the long vacation. Mr. Skinner was also settled in his new home, and Dr. Pusey occupied his own rooms under the same roof, but was too infirm to take any services at the chapel of the Convalescent Hospital, nor was Mr. Skinner ever able to Celebrate there. But he frequently gave instructions and addresses both in the chapel and the ward, and those to whom he ministered felt in their inmost hearts that, in his own words, God did indeed use him for the good of those dear in His sight ; he quickly won the enthusiastic affection and gratitude of both Sisters and patients, to the former of whom especially his instructions were fresh life.



One who was at Ascot during the last days before he left it for the winter wrote :

On Sunday last he gave a most touching and powerful address on death. But I must tell you a remarkable thing, that the Sunday before his address was on "final perseverance." A very awful sermon it was, and yet very comforting and most helpful. Just towards the close of it Sister Frances was called out of chapel, and she was just in time to say the last prayers for poor Jane, who died a few minutes before the end of the service. Almost the last words she spoke (I think Sister Frances said they were her last), just before we went in to Evensong, were, "O, *do* let me go and hear dear Mr. Skinner preach!" She had been much moved, the Sisters said, by the instructions he had given in the ward. Certainly he is really valued by the Sisters and the patients.

He wrote a paper about this time, at Dr. Pusey's request, setting down certain principles which he thought it important to observe in the constitution of any religious community. Of this paper, which has disappeared, he sent the following "Abridged Heads" to a friend :—

I. "*Popularity*." (Dr. Pusey had objected to me that "popularity" was not an end to be desired by the community.) "There is a good sense," I said, "of 'popularity' in which it may mean, not what the people *will* in order to pleasure and gratification, but what the people *need* in order to profit and happiness, and in this higher sense I must avow my conviction that, in order to practical usefulness, a religious community in England must be 'popular.'" I illustrated my conviction by the fact that, within fifty-seven years of the promulgation of the "Charter of Love" (which was a "new departure" for the religious houses of the West under the Cistercian rule), their establishment grew to five hundred all over Europe, not because the new rule pandered to popular *tastes*, but because it met the *needs* of human nature.

II. *Liberty.* "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." This dictum involves the contrast between the spontaneous and loving exercise of the Christian intellect and will and heart, and the servile tyranny of fear and obscurity, in the work of obedience. The whole question of obedience, in its nature and limits, was continually present to the minds of superiors and governors in religious houses, viz. how the wills of the many are to be harmonized into one. St. Bernard's treatise, "*De præcepto et dispensatione*," has been thought authoritative, and he pronounces against the *mechanical* instruments of an Abbot or a Prior's will—" *Nihil me Prælatus prohibeat horum qua promisi, nec plus exigat quam promisi*," etc.

III. *The Good of the whole Church.* The provision that all should be free exists in order that all may be edified and profited. Good or evil to the *whole* body of the Church is inevitably involved in these communities. Experience, therefore, soon required that none could be set up or carried on, except under laws approved and enforced by the Bishop of the diocese in which they are placed. It came to be defined by canon that all superiors must bring their administrative orders into conformity with such laws, and go neither below, nor beyond, nor beside, nor against them.

IV. *The Authority of the Bishop.* The recognition of the Bishop of the diocese, as supreme under Christ, lies at the foundation of religious houses from the beginning, and from the Council of Chalcedon to the Council of Trent it is the subject of canonical enactment.

V. *The Authority of Chapters.* It was found, as early as the rule of St. Benedict, that there was no safeguard to liberty, or to episcopal authority, within religious houses, except through the exercise of constitutional rights by Chapters. According to the privileges granted to the Benedictine rule, there is nothing to hinder a general or even a provincial Chapter from dispensing, interpreting, modifying, explaining, removing or relaxing, for a time or for ever, the whole body of the statutes, or from adapting obsolete rules and usages to present times and needs, or from

decreeing them entirely *de novo*. St. Benedict's rule was for superiors "to do *nothing* without advice."

VI. *Superiors and their Election.* Superiors were *never* chosen but by the Bishop or by the Chapter. By the date of the Benedictine rule (A.D. 526) the Bishop had lost the exclusive power, and the provision (chapter 64) runs, "The Abbot must be elected by the whole community, or at least by a majority; and if they make a bad choice, the Bishop or the Abbots of other houses, or even the faithful of the neighbourhood, may interfere to hinder it."

This rule was universal in the West.

The appointment of a superior for life was found an intolerable burden very early, and the house of Monte Cassino demanded from the Pope that no Abbot should hold office for longer than three years at one time. The (so-called) General Council of Latran confirmed this concession which the Popes were forced to make; and the annual ordinary Chapter and the triennial disciplinary Chapter became *compulsory* all over the West. At the latter Chapters all questions of reform, and of observance of rule, were debated and settled, the place of meeting for the next Chapter was declared, and not only were all officers appointed for each house for the next three years, but all delinquent superiors and others (if any) were punished or deposed.

The terrible winter of 1878-79 was severe even at Cannes, where Mr. Skinner arrived early in November, and he was very ill indeed from that time until the middle of January, often too weak and suffering to leave his bed.

I lay it all to the weather (his wife wrote), which, though less cold, is miserable. To-day is like an English November, and sunshine seems as far off as ever. One of the St. Paul's clergy Celebrated in our room for him on St. Stephen's Day—a *great* comfort; the first time he had received since we left Ascot.

To a newly ordained priest he wrote :

Cannes, Alpes Maritimes, St. Thomas's Day, 1878.

MY DEAR —,

You have been in my heart and in my prayers all the week; and on this day, on which the blessing so earnestly desired for you has, I trust, come down abundantly upon you, I make haste (as well as I can) to send you my congratulations.

I am not well, and have other letters I must write, so do not measure my love by the length of my letter. There is matter in my mind for a volume, if such an infliction would not be a calamity on you. It may therefore be somewhat fortunate that I have strength for no more than a short note.

I have observed that you put on your M.A. gown on the last degree day; so that you have now, by the blessing of God, arrived at what in one sense may be called the *culm* of your aspiration in academical and ecclesiastical affairs. The "master" is at the *top* in his own sphere, or faculty, within the university, and is possessed of all the franchise which is needful in seeking (if he be so minded) to teach in the university or to take part in its government. And the *priest* is at the top, in his own unearthly dignity within the Church, for all purposes for which the ministry exists—for teaching through the Word, and for binding up and feeding souls through the blessed sacraments. . . . My earnest and affectionate prayer to God for you is, that He may increase in you, day by day and year by year, the light by which you may grow in the estimate of the priestly office as *He sees it*, and the grace by which you may be enabled more and more to live the priestly life, and to work the priestly work, for no selfish ends, but simply for His honour and glory.

I hope you will not think that I am sermonizing you (for that would make me miss my aim) if I add a word or two of affectionate counsel, out of the consciousness which God has given me of my own grievous failures, all through my thirty-seven years' ministry, and especially (for want of knowing better) at the beginning of it.

I. About one's meditation or daily mental prayer. It is a steady and persistent habit of this alone that will keep one up to

the mark. As one is remiss in this, one begins to fail in energy and heart and efficiency—in *everything*. To the priest it is life and breath: it keeps God before him always as the end of his work; it keeps souls before him always as the subject of his work; and it keeps *self* at a distance as the main hindrance and impediment. One learns to pray every moment "*relinquam me, inveniam Te.*" I say nothing of the *capacity* which one receives for aiming higher and for accomplishing more, through the very increase of consciousness, as to weakness and humiliation which one receives.

II. About one's celebration of the sacraments. It was some years (alas! many) before I ever found out *why* it was, probably, that my ministration, especially of the Blessed Eucharist, was so cold and so perfunctory in itself, and so little, apparently, fertile in fruits of conscious progress in grace.

When I had learnt *never* on any account to Celebrate without saying my office of "Preparation," and *never* on any account to leave off after Celebration without saying my office of "Thanksgiving," I found out, by the gain which God gave me, how great had been the loss which my past ignorance (for it was nothing else) had entailed upon me.

Let me entreat you to acquire the blessed habit, and *never* to leave it off. Never go to your Celebrations in a hurry: be in church twenty minutes, or fifteen *before*, in order to have time for your "Preparation," and remain in church the like time for your "Thanksgiving;" and do not care to ask or to know what other men say or do about it. . . .

III. About theological reading. Now the time has come for you to *begin*. At the top you are in one sense, and no more examinations need cramp your liberty. But you are really at the bottom, in view of the overpowering heights which lie before you. I know that you do not set up to be a "student," in the sense of a profound scholar and reading man; but up to a certain mark every priest, the humblest as well as the greatest in intellectual gifts, is *bound* to be a student in the Divine science of theology. The difficulty has always been in the choice of subject-matter, so

as to husband time and not waste that measure of ability which is variously dealt out to each. Now, let me choose a book for you, which (with your Bible in the Greek, or Hebrew and Greek) may serve for a summary of theological science—"The Sentences of Peter Lombard." Don't be frightened at it. The value of it as a help to systematizing and methodizing all your sacred studies is simply enormous. Persevere with it; a little every day. Make notes as you go on, and don't be deterred by crabbed bits of mediæval Latin. Unless you keep up your Latin, you will never read to any purpose. If you can get a fellow-curate to read it with you, so much the better; and don't be scared by the word "schoolmen." Take people as you find them; seize upon their virtues, let their vices go. P. Lombard may be said to have founded "the schools;" but while he gave us the inestimable benefit of their method and order and system, the vices of their technicalism did not come till *long* after him.

. . . I have now pretty well tired myself, and I dare say have also exhausted your patience, though if you know how I love you, and what I would give to insure your being a happy and a faithful priest, you might bear this, and much more that I might say to prove it.

Once more, God be with you always!

Your very affectionate

JA. SKINNER.

FROM DR. PUSEY.

Christ Church, Oxford, First Sunday after Epiphany, 1879.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have been anxious about the effect of this very severe winter upon you. I have been afraid that you might have suffered less if shut up as I am in England. If we could have foreseen it, I think you would have been better off in my upper story, which in God's providence Cardinal Wolsey built for me. I have been here one-seventh of the time since he built it. *This* floor is impenetrable to cold, and I can air the rooms by changing them.

I have been longing to hear of you. Has it ever occurred to you to try Algiers? I have heard of consumptive persons being sent there with advantage. Malta was the one place where Froude lost his cough. France seems to have suffered from cold more than England. At least, we hear of wolves driven from their quarters in the Pyrenees to Lyons.

. . . I hope that, please God, you will be able to give some gentle help next summer in your original office of resident chaplain which you kindly undertook. But we must not wish you more than God gives; "Le rien ne demande rien, excepté Dieu toujours et en toutes choses."

With kindest wishes to Mrs. Skinner (which includes especially your own health),

Your most affectionate

E. B. P.

Easter was spent, with friends who had joined him, at Cimiez, which suited him well, but he was unable to Celebrate. His Lents were indeed "over;" he could but "keep" the Three Hours on Good Friday lying on cushions in a lovely garden near Vitali's Hotel.

From Cimiez they went by San Remo and Cornigliano to Varese, where he spent Whit-Sunday, and, to his great joy, Celebrated for the first time since leaving England. Then by slow stages to Nauheim in Hesse, to consult a doctor of great repute in such cases as Mr. Skinner's.

Nauheim, June, 1878.

I am much afraid that I cannot yet speak with any certainty of the future, as Dr. Beneke says I am "*one old Haus, and varra much out of repair*," and though something may be done, please God, to relieve my suffering and discomfort, there is little, or nothing, possible to be hoped for in the way of cure. I had two hours' most interesting conference with Dr. Doellinger at Munich. There is no symptom of failure about him, though he is eighty. He is true as steel to conscience and truth.

The following are notes of this visit written at the time :

Visited Dr. Doellinger at Munich, 11, Von Ter Tann St., Tuesday, June 17, 1879, from 12 to 2 p.m.

i. Newman.

Had never intended to wound him—not even that the opinion expressed about him should be published ; this through indiscretion of a correspondent who had written to ask for opinion of present position of Church politics. But now, having been *challenged* to defend his own accuracy as to the consistency of Newman's writings with Ultramontane authority, he had a great mind to *prove* it by an induction of examples. (1) St. John had great difficulty, though sent to Rome for the purpose, to keep the "Apologia" off the "Index." (2) The whole theory of the development dogma as advanced by Newman runs so counter to the infallibility theory, that the book could not fail to be condemned if it were known and read. Pope Leo probably never read it, and would not be interested in it (not a theologian but a statesman). He would read Newman's defence of the temporal power, and this would suffice to commend him for the Cardinalate, *added* to the great personal merits of the case.

Asked Doellinger to explain Newman's reference to the Fourth Council as an explanation of the *open* position left by the Vatican Council, and he could not. The Fourth Council absolutely closed the definition of the faith to the whole of the Occidental Church, whatever difficulties might have remained standing in the East.

"Newman's influence," he said, "over Congregations, studies, Propaganda, Rites, will be *nil* in his absence from Rome : no case ever heard of in which an *absent* Cardinal is consulted. Hergenrother will reside and will influence. His wholesale defence of everything done by the Roman Curia as perfection makes his promotion natural ; but in Germany, in spite of his respectable learning, such blind partisanship made him laughed at by those who know anything."

ii. Rome.



"Not a glimmer of hope that anything done in the past will be undone. The prospect as dark as darkness, till the Providence of God reveals the day of justice to all the nations and all the Churches, which will certainly be; and there will then be a great change everywhere, though we shall not live to see it. But what is even a generation, much less a lifetime, in the sight of God working out His own will? Meantime the deliberate encouragement by authority of unscrupulous ways in treating historical truth leaves no room for hope."

1. Manning. "I was in London," Doellinger said, "in 1851, when Manning had just been received into the Roman Communion, and he called on me to express his grateful thanks for being the means of this event, in that I had first taught him to believe that truth was possible to a Roman Catholic theologian: heretofore he had felt that Roman Catholics were compelled by their system to reject truth, but since he had read my historical manual, he had learnt, for the first time, that historical truth was paramount as the foundation of theology. This same man, even before the Vatican decree was pronounced, made a violent attack upon me because I had been so absurd as to declare that truth was a superior power to any authority whatsoever, maintaining that the Church represented by the Pope has power to gainsay truth!"

2. The latest theological light in Rome is a certain Vincenzi (to whose work, "De Sacra Monarchiâ," the *Quarterly Review* called Doellinger's attention), Professor of Theology in the Roman University,\* and Keeper of the Vatican archives. His theory is that the Old Testament contains in figure not merely the principle but the *personale* of Church government. (a) He finds in Moses and the priesthood a variety of dignified offices and powers which no theologians have hitherto discovered; and (b) he proceeds to clothe the Pope with the whole discovery. But coming to the history of the Church, he finds the whole body of conciliar authority absolutely silent on the subject—not so much as an allusion to these powers in any ancient Council or decree. What can possibly have happened but one thing—the historical ac-

\* Commonly called the "Sapienza."

counts of Councils and decrees must have been forged or tampered with? There is no other view of the case which will suit the discovery; therefore this is the correct view, and such a book is put forth *permissu superiorum*.

3. "A certain Italian bishop," Dr. Doellinger added, "named D'Avenzo—I think of Calvi—has recently attacked myself in a pamphlet in which he asks whether it is *possible* for a man like Alfonso Liguori, a canonized saint, etc., not to have known and acknowledged and *understood* what he was knowing and acknowledging, when he admitted the Isidorian frauds; and Dr. Avenzo therefore argues that, when Liguori defended his moral theology, it was NOT upon their authority, and that I was to be condemned for my imputation to the contrary. But what took place was this. I had said that among Italian theologians, of which two, who had been canonized, had adopted the Isidorian decrees—St. Thomas of Aquinas and St. Alfonso Liguori—everybody knew that the first had been deceived into his belief; but that as to the second, while in the prolegomena to his "Moral Theology" he had been careful to tell the world not to trust to the authority of the Isidorian decrees, in the body of the book itself he had taken a whole *catena* of quotations from the decrees, word for word, and appealed to them as authority. Of course Bishop d'Avenzo might have seen this for himself if he had pleased; but it would not have enabled him to attack me, and to have been made one of the latest batch of Cardinals."

iii. Old Catholics.

"I know very little of what is passing; no progress here: have ceased to take much interest since I had cause to disapprove of some of the courses taken."

"As to Loyson—hopelessly damaged in *public* character in a country like France, where a married priest, much more a monk, is an object of dislike and suspicion, not only among the faithful, but among heretics and unbelievers—no cause committed to such hands could prosper."

"As to Bishop Eden and episcopal jurisdiction—you must distinguish. There are three theological lines—

"(1) Of the high Roman \* by which the moment a Bishop, even the Pope, becomes heretical in doctrine, his jurisdiction ceases.

"(2) Of the Catholic : by which his jurisdiction is received so long as his doctrine is the doctrine of the national Church to which he belongs and from which he derives authority.

"(3) Of the (say) Calvinistic bodies : by which jurisdiction departs as in No. (1).

"If Bishop Eden takes either (1) or (3) as his principle, his episcopal licence to Loyson may be defended ; and the Archbishop of Paris should be the last to complain, since it is *his own view*. But if Bishop Eden takes (2), which is the view of the late Bishop of Brechin, his course is quite indefensible ; neither is there any case in the history of the Church of a Bishop passing into another's diocese to give help to the oppressed Church, save on the invitation of the Church oppressed. But there is no such invitation from Paris."

On taking leave, and thanking, and asking him to England—"not given up the hope."

Retains his Provostship of the Royal Chapel, and chaplaincy to the King, who is with him in heart. Work carried on by the Deans and Canons under him, who are asked no questions, and therefore (though, at heart, four of them are entirely with him in opinion) say their Mass.

Retains also his professorship, and his nominee lectures for him in theology. The Archbishop refused to accept any who attended *his* lectures.

No "silver lining to the cloud" visible as yet ; but truth will prevail, and what is time in the sight and the will of God ?

By the middle of July Mr. Skinner and his wife were again at Ascot, and although the summer of 1879 was unusually cold and wet, he was able to give an afternoon service and address almost every Sunday to the inmates of the hospital, and an instruction on Fridays to the Sisters, besides Celebrating frequently in his private oratory. He says of himself—

The Hermitage, Ascot, August 1, 1879.

Of course, such a season as this has been most trying to delicate people ; but I must not delude myself or others by supposing that all my failing is due to weather. I am much less fit for everything than last year, and can neither read, nor speak, nor walk, nor work, nor attempt anything, with half so much power. My consciousness of debility and helplessness is far greater. . . .

. . . The dear Doctor comes to me, and I to him, besides the occasional meetings in the wood. He is all sweetness and love, and I never saw him more vigorous in mind, nor do I find him so deaf as last year. He is very keen just now on an answer he is preparing to Farrar's mischievous speculations, which have, I suspect, led that rather unfledged theologian into deeper waters than he knows how to fathom. The Doctor is, of course, quite at home on these intricate and subtle distinctions of the Rabbinical writers of the second century about Gehenna, and is exposing Farrar's ignorance in appealing to traditions which really tell the other way. I have been working up one or two points for him, such as the witness of Josephus to the Jewish belief in the eternity of punishment, though queerly mixed up with speculations about the transmigration of souls. . . . He wants me to undertake a translation of the "*Acta Martyrorum*," to which he largely appeals as evidence of simple faith, in a simple believing age, of simple minds, in the eternity of joy and the eternity of suffering which God has revealed to man. But I am past all work, I fear ; for even a long talk tires and excites me, and one hour's work utterly breaks me down.

But, this year, no one seems able to hold up against the atmospheric troubles except the dearest old E. B. P., who is perfectly well, and works all day, while I can do nothing.

Almost daily notes passed between the friends ; here is one from Dr. Pusey written at this time :

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Would you kindly let me look at Brucker again ? I cannot understand St. John ix. 2, except as involving that the

disciples supposed some transmigration possible. Wisd. viii. 20 would be true of the Incarnation ; however, I suppose it need not imply pre-existence of the soul. If you have A Lapide's "Commentary," I should be glad to look at it on St. John and Wisdom.

I fear that the weather must prevent your getting on ; me it only keeps in the house, but I use the old remedy of Sir H. Halford, the physician of George III., for old people—a small fire and an open window.

Yours affectionately,

E. B. P.

I have been rather better the last few days (Mr. Skinner wrote on Sept. 3). Dearest E. B. P. has been very much out of sorts, in the rainy weather ; he is now himself again, and sits out all day and every day. I was enabled (D.G.) to minister at the deathbed of dear little Fanny, the smiling child who suffered from spine disease. She suddenly collapsed, dear child, and had a time of fearful suffering in death. I never witnessed a longer "agony"—a proof, doubtless, of our dear Lord's love for her ; but what a mystery ! She will be dreadfully missed, and the whole scene was most touching.

Malvern Link, September, 1879.

And now of Newland. The weather here is simply horrible, every day more or less wet, and all the country damp and chilly to the last degree. But the hearty and tender welcome which all of every degree grant me touches me deeply. The dear old people whom I am seeing by degrees refresh me. Dear old Moulden (in bed and a great sufferer) wept like a child, and held my hand as if he could not let it go. Old Robert Lawrence, ninety years of age, with his eyes full of tears : "Oh, if you could but say the last words over me !" I have not been nearer to my old home than the opposite side of the quad. ; I dare not enter. Perhaps I may gather courage before I go. I have great comfort in the church, and go and pray, and examine over and over again the lovely walls, and say my *Te Deum* in thanksgiving for it, to Him whose it is. HE has quite taken away all regret that I can

no longer call it mine in any sense ; and He makes me glad in the thought that I had ever anything to do with making it His. Many of the people speak of you and your visit here with such gratitude, thinking it so kind of you to have come to tell them of us. I have not been able yet to communicate anywhere here, but I hope to receive at Newland before I go. I was, thank God, able to receive at the funeral of dear little Fanny at Ascot, the day before leaving.

Mr. Skinner hoped and intended to try and spend this winter at Ascot, but in October his doctor positively forbade his attempting it, and, as he shrank intensely from the thought of a journey and foreign hotels, sanctioned his trying some sheltered place in England, recommending Bath. There he took up his winter abode. Dr. Pusey remaining at Ascot, wrote to him at Christmas :

Feast of St. Stephen, 1879.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

All Christmas blessing be with you and yours. This fighting does make one sick at heart. Melancthon in his late years used the prayer *A rabie Theologorum, Libera nos, Domine*. We have great need of the angels' prayer : "On earth peace, goodwill toward men."

I am glad that you are well housed ; if you have escaped fogs, on your hill, it has been a marvellous escape. We had a bright November here, but this month, since the thaw, summer and fog have alternated. I have escaped all cold by being shut up, and yet have had air.

What I hear is most believed is that Jeune, out of instinctive reverence, refused to put in evidence the consecrated wafer, and that it is certain that neither Lord Penzance nor he believed that It was. But that It was, somehow. The Archbishop's letter was a cold one, but did not contain unbelief. I wrote to thank the Archbishop for having recovered It, in the name of tens of thousands.

I hope that the Bath chair is owing to the steepness of the hill-side, not to any want of strength ; but I fear that the power of Celebrating early has not yet returned.

You will be glad to hear that Mrs. ——'s munificence has obtained a *locum tenens* for the Bishop of Capetown's nephew, Mr. Gray, and that he is to be here for four months.

The dove-cotes \* look very well. They are finished, all but the last coat of paint. We must pray for doves to fill them.

I am again at work on Farrar's mischievous book, but the tide has been rolling on meanwhile. M. B. thanks you and Mrs. Skinner for your kind wishes for her and the Sisters, and asks me to give you her most cordial wishes in return.

Ever yours very affectionately,

E. B. P.

\* New buildings at Ascot for the Sisters.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### LAST SUMMERS.

1879-1881.

“Yes ! let the fragrant scars abide,  
Love-tokens in Thy stead,  
Faint shadows of the spear-pierced Side,  
And thorn-encompassed Head.”

THE winter and spring of 1879-80 were spent by Mr. Skinner at Bath, which suited him better in every respect than the Riviera. But he was seldom able even to go to church, and the extracts of letters which follow tell of no real improvement. He occupied himself in translating the “Manuale” of St. Augustine into English odes, published under the title of “Cœlestia.”

Bath, Shrove-Tuesday, 1880.

Our weather is now what people call “delicious,” but the contrast to what we *have* had is too great and too sudden for me, and I drop down into the jelly-fish stratum of life without power of revival. I have just come in from a long drive over the Combe Down ; it was refreshing ; but I am very tired, and somehow letter-writing tires me more than anything else, though there is nothing else that I do, to make up for deficiencies in that.

I have just got the Wilberforce Life, and have glanced through it. How curious that your Archbishop began his acquaintance and intimacy with him by leading him to inquire into mystic and



scholastic theology; and how his mind seemed to seize upon the former as the evangelizing element in the mediæval system! But, somehow, all through, there seems a poor and disappointing standard, *taken for granted* as the highest, . . . elevated, by his amazing faculty, into ecclesiastical statesmanship.

Second Sunday in Lent, 1880.

How more than kindly are the words of the good Archbishop about my two literary bairns! I am greatly encouraged to go on and finish the "Synopsis." I get on very slowly with my preface, the difficulty being to omit and compress. And I am so soon tired out, that an hour's work finishes me up.

Wednesday in Easter Week, 1880.

This is really *my* Easter Day; I have not been able to get my Easter Communion till to-day. I therefore write on my glad day to you, to wish you every blessing that the good God may order for you, even through suffering and privation, in order to your rising, the more, with Him Who must needs suffer *before* He entered into His glory.

Dr. Pusey wrote after the death of his only son and his own severe illness:

Christ Church, Oxford, Saturday in Easter Week, 1880.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

The exhaustion of that night was so great that, notwithstanding the great mercy of God to me in it, I was laid up for some weeks, and although I thanked God for having preserved me such a son for nearly fifty years, I could not read the letters which were written in such kindness to me. When I could read them I still could not write of them.

God was indeed very good. My dear son was cut off from all human aid. He was for those six hours insensible to the outer world. He could hear absolutely nothing, nor feel anything. I did not dare give him the Viaticum because something returned from the stomach. I did not dare even moisten his lips with the

Blood of Christ. But God was with him. Towards the end, the nurse said to me, "He must be going now." I looked at his face. You remember that his features were plain; but there was a calm heavenly beauty such as I think I have never seen. Others told me that it continued as long as it could be seen. God must have been speaking to him, and left that superhuman beauty. Thanks be to Him.

Since I have been able to use my brain, Acland advises me to take up what work I could, so I have taken up my often interrupted pages, "What is of faith as to everlasting punishment?" in the hope of also meeting some popular objections.

I have seen incidentally that you have been able to write to the *Times*, so I hope that the confinement and the cold have not increased your ailments.

You will be glad to hear that the Bishop of Oxford has, at the instance of the Mother and all the Sisters and Novices of the society, consented to become Visitor. He wrote a very cordial letter, promising to take an interest in the society. . . .

Let me hear how you are.

Your very affectionate

E. B. P.

Early in May Mr. Skinner returned to Ascot.

The Hermitage, May 18, 1880.

I have not been able to write to you, first, on account of the trouble attendant on leaving Bath, and next on account of the trouble of settling here. Unhappily, I caught a bad cold on Whit-Sunday, when I gave Evensong and an address after having Celebrated, in my own oratory, in the morning. I do not think that I have attempted so much since I left Newland, and I do not think I should have been any the worse if it had not been for the bitter wind and icy cold of the chapel. Poor Sister G. was so very anxious that the Sisters and patients (of whom there are many) should not lose all spiritual brightness and help on such a grand *festa*, that I could not resist making an effort. And I believe that I did right in trying, and that "my soul received comfort,"

though my poor broken body has come to a little extra grief. The cold of this place is far in advance of Bath, nevertheless it is most sweet and reposeful, and freshening and invigorating, and both I and my dear wife felt (for, I think, the first time) what a comfortable, homey, cheery, summer *pied-à-terre* had been, under God, provided for us.

Before Mr. Skinner's return to Ascot this summer, his wife wrote : " He is so feeble ! I now have hardly a ray of hope that he will ever be able for any work relating to his holy calling."

Yet, as often before, his mind conquered the body, and he frequently gave instruction at the hospital during the summer. In August he paid a visit to his beloved Newland, staying with his sister at Malvern Link. His wife notes in her journal :

*Aug. 12.*—At five o'clock went to Evensong at Newland, and James went into his old place in the stalls (Mr. White being absent), and read the Second Lesson. It seemed like a dream, and yet so natural. The place was looking its very loveliest, my garden blazing with flowers.

"I felt nothing but thankfulness and happiness," she wrote to a friend at this time ; "all other feelings were taken away from me."

Dr. Pusey was at times during this summer unable, from increased deafness, to carry on conversation ; he writes to Mr. Skinner, alluding to a friend's illness, although under the same roof :

September 28, 1880.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Thank you most kindly. I had heard that your wife had said that she had nursed the dear daughter, whom God took, through an attack of gastric fever once, and I was thinking that I

might ask her what remedies were used. But I hesitated because of all the sorrowful reminiscences. For one can look back on a whole, not on details.

The saddest of all losses are those which were brought on by mismanagement, as this of dear Lowder's. It always comes to one, "if he had not," etc. God overrules it, but it seems less His doing than what He does directly. However, one would not disturb his brother's brightness. But his brother might be gladdened with the thought of dear J. H. N., when, in those early days, I was regretting some loss of one who might have done so much good: "Perhaps they may do more for us there." Tell him this with my kind regards.

We must not lose courage at anything. Only think of the days when the whole world groaned at finding itself Arian, or Liberius and Hosius apostatized, or when emperors extruded orthodox Bishops, or a general Council had to anathematize Honorius, or the Robber Council which began in all due form, but where a Patriarch of Alexandria countenanced a Patriarch of Constantinople being kicked to death; or that century when Baronius says the only good of the Popes was to continue the succession, and our Lord seemed to be asleep in the boat, and they were afraid to wake Him up, lest He should come to judge them.

I suppose that the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness will grow on together. Did you happen to see in the last *Church Times* a paper by a Wesleyan, in which Dr. Rigges was quoted as saying that "never in the history of the Church was there such a revival as that in the Church of England in the last thirty years"?

Poor — ! One ought to pray for him more. I heard that he said, probably some years ago, that he supposed that the Resurrection would have to be considered an open question.

But Cardinal Newman has said of late years that he had rather have to do with the open unbelief of this century, than the secret unbelief in the Middle Ages.

As for the Supreme Court in 1850, I, too, was one who over-rated the mischief of its wrong decisions. It made Baptism an

open question judicially, and the belief has grown ever since. Some one asked Parker why my book on Baptism did not sell now. He answered, "Nobody wants it, because nobody questions the doctrine. Controversy has gone to the other sacrament." Mr. Capes must exaggerate; such shamelessness can only injure those who identify themselves with him. But his letter shows that consciences must be awake, although his is asleep; else he would not have to give them a narcotic. I am only afraid of people's tempers and their using their own nostrum of disestablishment and ejection of Bishops from the House of Lords, and wish there were more of the spirit of the old Tractarian days: "Stand still and see the salvation of God." There is a great work going on among the young men at Oxford, notwithstanding the evil; but the darnel shows itself by its gaudy colours, while the corn ripens uninjured by it. With every good wish,

Your very affectionate

E. B. P.

Ascot Priory, October, 1880.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

My pleasant time is to be over on Saturday. My infirmities have been a great hindrance to our seeing one another. I have given up hearing long sentences, though your voice is so clear, for fear of misunderstanding what is said.

I have written what I could to poor —, for it is soothing to have one's hopes echoed. "Out of the deep" issues in "O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption."

I have written a useless letter of remonstrance to —, saying that in all this agitating there are two parties whom we leave out of consideration, of very different importance, but one of very great weight; with the other we have a very intimate relation—Almighty God and ourselves.

In our early Tractarian days we used a prayer out of Daniel ix., with other prayers of humiliation and for internal unity. J. H. N. drew them up at my wish. Now we seem to do nothing but bark at and devour one another.

But there is no use in complaining, except to God.

You or Mrs. Skinner will tell me how you fare in this coming week.

Your very affectionate

E. B. P.

On October 14, his wife's birthday, Mr. Skinner Celebrated in his oratory, with her and one other friend. He never Celebrated again.

By the end of October he was again settled in Bath for the winter. He writes at the opening of the year 1881, which was to be his last on earth :

Just one line, my dearest —, to convey to you my heart's best wishes, and my soul's best prayers, for every blessing in the year which begins to-day.

How little, happily, we can know of what it will bring forth ; but how safely may we commend it and ourselves to God !

February 8, 1881.

You will be glad to hear, at length, that I can say I *am* a little better, and suffer less, in that struggling for breath, amidst paroxysms of coughing, which has lately been so frequent. . . . I am writing a note to E. B. P., who has sent me his letter to Liddon with the title of "Unlaw or Judgments," etc. A wonderful effort at his age, betokening not only his unabated skill in marshalling details, with confusion and yet with power, but his bravery and chivalry in defence of truth, and his quiet humour, not without sarcasm and *malice cachée*, in bating an offender like —. Get it and enjoy the telling little bit about the "raw theologian from Belgium," and the cut at the "four tutors." Church's article in the *Nineteenth Century* is also extremely well done ; it is so quiet in its strength.

February 28, 1881.

Oh, my dearest —, how my heart bleeds this morning for that poor sorrow-stricken sister at —, and indeed for all of you

who loved and treasured that noble soldier \* whom God has suddenly summoned to His courts, where arms are no longer needed.

The only thing that compensates is—that they must all have been prepared, at any time, to hear of a soldier's death, for one so stationed in the very forefront of danger; and more, prepared also that he should win the highest of all a soldier's aims, the crown of loyalty to duty.

It must be further a source of sweet consolation to his friends to know how his heart and his head were alike devoted, from the beginning of this most miserable war, to the duty of conducting it with as much humanity and righteousness as the circumstances would admit. Oh, what a gloomy prospect lies before the country, and what stricken hearts and desolate homes are now bearing witness to the cost! The 58th Regiment seems to have been all but annihilated. I see no possibility now of the Free State emerging from the fray, and what will become of the Mission and the many English there, God alone knows.

I can write on no other subject, my heart and head are so full of this. Let us besiege the Throne of Grace with prayer.

March 15, 1881.

I have been wanting sorely to write to you for many days past, and have not been able. . . . The change in my general strength this year is very marked; I am far more feeble and worn out; and my power of rallying after severe paroxysms of cough and breathlessness is far less. *Fiat Voluntas Dei*. These are tokens of His love, *beacon*-ing me on to the end. I am quite unequal to any literary work now; I fear I cannot, anyhow, get on with my paper † on J. K.'s book. I am days together without the power of even *thinking* about it, far less of writing. And yet I have worked up so much of it that it would worry me most of all to give it up altogether.

\* Sir George Pomeroy Colley.

† A review on Mr. Keble's "Outlines for Meditation" (Parker and Co.), promised for the *Church Quarterly*.

I return you all the Lowder papers. Many of those letters bring back to my eye his father's quiet, grave, subdued, almost afflicted, yet bright and genial face, and his mother's very sweet and gentle, but very impressive character, as they both almost idolized their son.

I send you the letters which have passed between E. B. P., M. B., and me, since dear Roberts' death left the poor place in famine. The position now is simply this—that whenever there is any priest forthcoming to occupy the house as resident chaplain, I make way for him.

What a new horror is this from St. Petersburg! God help us! "The days are very evil, the times are waxing late," sure enough. May He keep us near Himself in truth, and justice, and mercy, and love, in all our thoughts and words and acts, that we may not fail when the Judge is "really at the gate."

March 23, 1881.

I have not had you less continually and warmly in my heart and prayers, that I have not said so sooner in this time of your mingled sorrow and joy—sorrow for the irreparable loss to your sight, and joy for the unspeakable gain to the soul of that precious aunt just gone home. Yet God can make up to you for what you must miss, in that ever-teaching face of love and sweetness, and, still more, in that living example of high-souled faith and goodness; He can bring all her lessons of the past more vividly "into your remembrance," and can enable you, with more zeal and purpose of heart, to follow them. But nothing could take the place to *her* of that perfect rest and still more perfect fulfilment of all her longings after God, into which she has now passed. So it is soon made clear that her gain is ineffably more to be joyed over than your loss is to be lamented.

I love to think of her as with the "saints," who, even in Paradise, are "joyful with glory" and "rejoice in their beds."

How beautiful is the symbol of "bed"—expressing the repose of the inmost soul, with the conscience cleansed and rested, through the precious Blood!



Conceive, therefore, of that dear tender conscience, ever conscious of God's eye, and ever straining to please Him, ever awake to the dangers of self-will, and ever eager to avert them by acts of duty—in obedience, in humility, in almsgiving, in prayer, in sympathy with suffering, above all, in appointed worship and devotion,—conceive of it now and for ever at rest—in peace, on shore, at home; and you will not fail to identify dear Lady Helena with the thousands gone before who are “joyful with glory” and “rejoice in their beds.”

I wish I could write more, but I had another bad night, and am not able, and I am unwilling to delay longer saying something.

Easter Thursday, 1881.

I am still sorely crippled, and am, by the will of the Blessed God, carrying my poor little cross into the Easter festival. But I have had comparatively two easier nights; and I am hoping (D.V.) to throw off the acute pain before the end of the festival. Dearest Eichbaum comes to give me my Easter Communion on the eighth day.

All blessing be on you to-morrow, your natural as well as supernatural birthday—for, surely, in our dearest Lord, you were reborn with Him when He rose from the tomb, raising, as He then did, our common humanity, and setting it for ever free from the bondage of death.

May 6, 1881.

I am as before, suffering bad nights and mornings alternately with the enjoyment of greater repose. But I *never* shall be any better; and my mind is quite made up to the enjoyment of suffering, or rather of such patience as it shall please the Blessed God to grant me through grace and the cross of His dear Son. We are now beginning to think of our departure from Bath; and I am a little dreading the colder air of Ascot in this very backward season. But we do not really go thither till the week after next, and by that time summer may have set in, at least in promise. I think it will be my last use of Ascot, and of all that your love provided for me there.

The resolution to give up his home at Ascot was strongly opposed by Dr. Pusey.

Christ Church, Oxford, March 6, 1881.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Nothing seemed to me less likely than that you should not occupy the house which was built for you, as long as God should leave you to us. M. B. thought the acceptance of your offer to resign it out of the question. She said, "It is Mr. Skinner's as long as God shall continue him here." . . . It is a sad issue of the bright hopes with which I invited you to be chaplain before that winter abroad, and must have been heavy upon you. But it has been His will.

With every good wish,

Yours affectionately,

E. B. P.

To another friend Dr. Pusey wrote in June :

It is all very disappointing, sadly disappointing to Mr. Skinner, who looked forward so brightly to so much usefulness. But—

"In disappointment Thou canst bless,  
So love at heart prevail."

I wish that Mr. Skinner would not think of moving. And, after all, God alone knows whether we shall be able to have a resident chaplain. . . . I cannot bear the idea of dear Mr. Skinner moving. I know what the moving of those books would be ; it would be too great an effort to put them up again for me. I should leave them in their boxes. We do not know yet that the house would be of any use to us.

Sir W. Gull is taking great interest in Ascot, so that is a bright streak.

It was true, as he felt himself, that there was a marked increase this year in the weakness and suffering, against which that brave, hopeful spirit had struggled for so long.

The lovely summer of 1881 did not, as formerly, bring him any relief or strength ; only it enabled him to sit out, often for hours each day, on the lawn of his little garden, and to enjoy the perfect air and peace. He occupied himself continually, chiefly out of doors, with collecting and sifting materials for the life of his friend Mr. Lowder, written at this time at his wish and suggestion. This was a great interest and delight to him throughout the summer, and was indeed his last *work*.

How vivid is the remembrance of the daily life that last summer, and of the picture which cannot fade from the heart—the worn but beautiful form and face, looking only “like an excuse for the soul remaining on earth,” the trees and flowers which were a pleasure to him—his wife gardening and then resting by him, or going to and fro between his study and the lawn, bringing him papers and books.

He could never Celebrate now, or give addresses at the hospital, but some priest came every week to stay with him for a night, and to Celebrate in the hospital chapel. And then in the early loveliness and stillness of those summer mornings, the heavenly Food was carried from the altar to him who had hoped to minister there himself.

Ascot Hermitage, June 25, 1881.

MY DEAREST —,

A thousand thanks for your tenderly affectionate letter on my birthday, and for all the “pretty” things contained in it. I wish I were worthy of a little fraction of the superabounding love which God gives me.

I have now entered my sixty-fourth year of grace, and find myself (in mercy to my soul) withdrawn from many a field of work which I have previously wasted or misused (God grant it

may not be *abused*) in the years that are passed. The time which remains to me is all due to this one call, of contrition and preparation for judgment, which presses on me more than I dare say to any but God. I hope that you will pray for me without ceasing, that I may be "accepted at that day" through the precious Blood, in which is *all* my hope and trust.

So many thanks for all your painstaking detail about my beloved St. Barnabas', though of course I have been over the whole of it with Alfred Gurney, and marked, with mingled feelings, every token, obliterated and left, of the original times.

August 8, 1881.

The Doctor gave us rather an alarm this morning, but he is all right again now. He has been overdoing himself lately, with the preface to Philip's book on St. Cyril; and he has taken poor Green's imprisonment *most piteously* to heart, and the failure of the appeal to the House of Lords.

In September Mr. Skinner went for a week's visit with his wife to Malvern Link, and spent much of his time at Newland. It was his farewell visit to his dear old friends: every one thought him much more failing than in the previous year, and he was only able to lie in an easy-chair in the "sick chamber" (a bay looking into the church) for service.

Nothing *could* have been more delightful to me (he writes, a few days after his return to Ascot) than my Newland visit this year; I enjoyed it thoroughly, and bless God for His goodness in suffering me once more to make it. Though fewer and fewer of the old *pets* remain, they seem to have gathered in the more love to give me, as their numbers diminish.

We are already taking first measures for our great move; and work and anxiety connected with that rather appal me, but, like all things else, it will have an end.

Mr. Skinner wrote the following letters a few days

before leaving Ascot, to two friends who had applied to him for advice as to the best books to read up in order to write an essay on the subject given by the Archbishop of Dublin to the "Church History Class" connected with a college for girls which he had founded: "Estimate the debt which the Church owes to St. Athanasius and St. Augustine respectively."

Ascot Hermitage, October 15, 1881.

As to St. Athanasius and St. Augustine, you ask me to do what would be hard if I was myself and among my books; but being between "the pillar and post" of a forlorn house without order or anything but confusion, and without one book to refer to, you ask me to do an impossibility.

Meantime, and until the Archbishop goes to Dublin for what he wants, I advise his daughters to *talk* to him a great deal about the writings which distinguish the two great doctors, to pick his brains, and to extort, from *his* reading of the original sources (the only safe authority for her essay), the estimate respectively of what the Church owes to each, considering the time and the circumstances at and under which God called each to labour.

*E.g.* I. How He called up St. Athanasius at a time, from Constantine to Valens, when the Church was exposed to the two formidable fires of secular favour and spiritual deceit, to deliver the truth, and to witness for it by his life and death, upon the foundations of Christianity—the mystery of the incarnation of God and the doctrine of the ever-glorious Trinity.

How God gave him the *courage* of his convictions (Athan., "Contra Mundum"), as shown in his apologies—to Constantine, and "De Fuga sua."

How, also, the Church learnt from him that depth of *inner* life which orthodox Christianity presupposes, as the effect in all who really believe the truth; and which cannot but manifest itself in the mortified lives of those whom God calls to witness. See his view of the solitary's dedicated life, and his "Life of St. Anthony."

Read the Funeral Oration of St. Gregory Nazianzen on St. Athanasius, and what St. Jerome says of him in his "Scriptores Ecclesiastici."

II. Then not to *compare* the two together (which were not wise), but to speak of St. Athanasius as the master and pioneer and forerunner in the glorious arena of conflict for the truth, or of St. Augustine, nearly a century later, as the disciple, *outrunning* the elder champion, not in zeal, but in breadth of operation and in wealth of weapons.

Consider his marvellous accomplishments and many-sidedness—his culture in grammar and scholarship, in dialectics and rhetoric and music, in all of which he not only knew but taught.

How he formulated Christian morality into almost a science : gave laws to the religious life, and exhibited the first example of a community doing active work for God.

How he shone before the Church as an interpreter of Holy Scripture, and laboured, never with more delight to himself, or blessing to the faithful, in *exegesis* of the Divine Word, the Old Testament and the New.

Finally, what a treasury of *dogma* God gave him to build, to be a bulwark and a resource through all time, for the safe guidance of souls amid the shifting sands of human opinion.

Negatively, against Jews and Pagans, Stoics and Epicureans, and Manicheans, against Priscillianists, Origenists, Arians, Sabelians, Pelagians, Donatists, etc., etc. Positively, upon grace, and predestination, and election, and all the sacraments of the Church.

DEAR ———,

I wrote some helpless words to M——. Since writing I have got my October number of the *Church Quarterly*. There is a grand passage upon St. Athanasius (in which I cannot mistake the master hand of Dean Church). It is on pp. 224 to 227, and I greatly commend it to you. *Your* point of view must, however, be historical, not theological ; it occurs to me, as, possibly, the most profitable reading for you, to gather up the estimate of the two great doctors taken respectively by such different minds as

Fleuri, Mosheim, Giesler, Neander, Doellinger, in their histories, and to strike *your own* balance. It will be profitable for you to see Dr. Bright's two recent volumes of St. Athanasius.

I asked my great neighbour to tell me what he advises you to read, but he has not yet replied. When he does, I will send the result to you.

Hermitage, October 16, 1881.

DEAR —,

The dear Doctor wrote the enclosed yesterday, after all ; you will perhaps let me have the letter again, as everything is interesting which he writes now in the end of his days, still so full of keen mental strength.

It occurs to me to say that no "estimate" of St. Augustine's work for the Church of God can afford to disregard his remarkable power as a philosophic writer taking Christianity from the standpoint of the intellectualist, and vindicating for it the highest claim to the dignity of *the* perfect philosophy.

There is a beautiful chapter, drawing this out, in the "Connaissance de Dieu" of Père Gratry—I think the fourth chapter, entitled "La Théodicée de St. Augustin."

Ever yours most truly,

J. SKINNER.

I did not tell him that *you* are the "young lady" so inquiring, lest he should say, as well he might, "Let her take her pitcher to the well that is overflowing at her side, and it will be filled."

FROM DR. PUSEY.

October 15, 1881.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

The lady would find a good deal, I think, in Bright's Church History, up and down. Especially she would find facts ; which are, of all things, most valuable. I will send you, please God, a notice which I have written, at Dr. Bright's request, to a new volume of St. Athanasius's later treatises. His notes are all condensed information. J. H. N.'s notes of St. Athanasius (of whom three volumes were translated in the "Library of the Fathers") are a mine of wealth condensed.

The answer which the young lady has to work out is that St. Athanasius was the defender of the faith against the various shapes of the Arian and semi-Arian heresies which tried to replace the Creed at Nicæa ; and St. Augustine of the doctrines of grace against the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian heresies.

If she has this on her mind, she will be able, I think, easily to fill out what she wants by the aid of Dr. Bright's "History of the Church."

13, The Paragon, Bath, October 30, 1881.

DEAR —,

It has occurred to me, since I wrote to you, that no estimate of St. Augustine's work for the Church would be complete which left out the part he took in sanctifying the principles of justice and equity (*justitia et jus*), and presenting the Church of Christ as the *true tribunal* for the settlement of all strife.

Later down in Church history, you see the high offices of state and of justice held by dignified ecclesiastics ; but it was then—too often, alas !—the Churchman *sunk* in the lawyer or the statesman. But what St. Augustine typifies is the Bishop and shepherd of souls, gathering up into his own high *spiritual* dignity the office of judge and peacemaker, and *absorbing* the last in the first ; while he is, in the process, laying the foundations of *law* deep down upon Christian principles.

St. Ambrose, his great master, led the way. He (St. Ambrose) tells us, in his commentary on the hundred and eighteenth and hundred and nineteenth psalms, that the Church should suffer no departure from the strict principle of "justice" in dealing with discipline, lest excommunicated persons should too easily *extort* restoration from the laxity of spiritual judges ; he dreaded the contagion of sin, when once men saw the road back again to reputation made easy.

St. Augustine seems to have worked on his master's lines, and it is certain that the impression which his judicial labours made upon his age was very marked ; he makes us greatly regret, *now*,



how utterly the Church has lost this essential part of her wealth of blessing for "society."

Posidonius, in his life of St. Augustine (ch. xix.), details how he (St. Augustine) would often spend whole days, fasting from dawn to "the hour of refection," in hearing and settling causes (*causas forenses*); and how, in the short intervals between the evidence of one witness and another, he would make appeals to the litigants, to compare their progress, or their fallings off, in the Christian life; reproving sinners *publicly*, yet with such care and wisdom that none were offended. He used to call this sort of labour "a *parergon*," or occupation by the way. "How *can* a man preach or meditate on the sacred writings in a very whirlpool of business?" he would ask. "Easily: by always treating the occasion and the clients with some word on holy things." Thus, he would suggest to the traders and merchants who came for his decisions, "Thou foolish one, this night thy soul, etc., and then, whose shall thy riches be?"

All sorts of every rank resorted to him, to resolve questions of law in money, lands, flocks, etc., etc.

In his book, "De Opere Monachorum," he avows that, personally, he would much rather be occupied in the cloister, without distraction, in alternate prayer, study, and manual labour, than in the perplexing office of interfering between litigants and their anxious claims; but he *insists* that this was an *apostolic duty* prescribed by St. Paul (1 Cor. vi. 1, etc.) to all *resident* Bishops, and especially to himself (as he modestly thought), one of the "least esteemed" in the Church ("contemptibiles, qualis ego sum"). He dares not shrink from it. He adds that the patient discharge of it brought abundant consolations; he was the servant of the Church, and especially of those members who are the *weakest*.

Commenting on the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth psalms, he describes, in detail, the sort of difficulties attending judgments which the Church had to solve: how, if the decision was in favour of the rich, a charge was made of *fear* lest greatness should be offended; if in favour of the poor, then came a charge of *oppression* of the rich, in order to vulgar popularity, etc. So the secular

authorities were glad to be relieved, and not only left the Church to settle all disputes, but declined to hear appeals against her to themselves.

In a word, we seem to see in St. Augustine the typical Bishop, ruling his flock, in externals and internals alike, upon the principle of the Church's "*motherhood*," in *all* things, to *all* her children. You have the type of the episcopal "court of audience"—the shadow, at least, of which remained in our own episcopal courts of first instance—until (1) the Pope, and (2) the King, took all jurisdiction, *virtually*, into his own hands. Now, here in England, the Church has no authority whatsoever as a *judge*, but has yielded all to the Crown, or rather to the Parliament, which is not believing.

In *new* countries the Church might reassert her place as the appeaser and adjuster of all disputes; you might persuade your African Bishop to walk in the footsteps of the great doctor and saint of Hippo, and to reinstate the "court of audience" at Bloemfontein. . . .

We unite in most respectful regards to the Archbishop and Mrs. T——, and in love to F—— and yourself, while I ever am, dear ——,

Most truly yours,  
J. A. SKINNER.

Mr. Skinner gave up his home at Ascot on October 18. The Sunday before, he gave a parting address to the Sisters in the chapel, his last ministry of any kind, and bade them farewell.

FROM DR. PUSEY.

Ascot Priory, October 13, 1881.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

It is very, very sad, as all partings are. I had so hoped that this would have been your home, until God should call you to your everlasting home. I had such bright dreams of your future usefulness here when —— told me of your thinking of

work in a convalescent hospital, and I said of your coming here, "It is too good to be true." It is very, very sad, and although my loss of hearing cuts me off from much intercourse with those whom I love, yet it is pleasant to be under the same roof with one who loves one and whom one loves. But God's will is clearest there where it "triumphs at our cost," and His will has acted by conforming yours to it.

God knows whether I shall come here another year, *i.e.* whether I shall see another year. The two houses will be different, in that there will not be one whom I love, as for these many years I have loved you, next door; and the likelihood of your coming to Oxford must be very small. So it will be a losing out of sight.

I have fixed Monday week for beginning my lectures, please God, so I expect to stay here till Saturday week.

God be with you evermore.

Your very affectionate

E. B. P.

"We went to Bath on October 18," Mrs. Skinner writes, "and got into our house on November 22. We were in the house *together* just five weeks."

## CHAPTER XX.

REST.

1881.

“ The morning shall awaken,  
The shadows shall decay,  
And each true-hearted servant  
Shall shine as doth the day.”

THE fatigue of moving, and of settling into his house at Bath, tried Mr. Skinner severely, yet neither he nor those around him had any thought that the end was very near. He writes early in November :

Bath, Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity, 1881.

I am worse than a wreck ; whether I shall ever be able to look up again I know not. Meantime, all my copy for the “Synopsis” is printed, and they are waiting for more, and my Liddell paper, due next week, not so much as thought of. Tell your cousin E—— that, under such circumstances, I cannot prepare an “alternative subject” for her class, nor, indeed, should I think it well, if I were ever so free, to do it ; because the class should never be allowed to shirk anything, however difficult, but, in all things, at all times to do its best. They are the difficult subjects which test the diligent.

God bless you both.

Bath, December 3, 1881.

At last I am wielding this wonderful copying pencil on your behalf, being thoroughly ashamed to put off any more, though I

am less and less disposed towards the manual operation of a letter every day, and less and less equal to the effort of thinking of anything, and of writing what I think.

I have not had such a long and serious attack as this for years; and it leaves me, if indeed it ever means to leave me at all, reduced in every direction in all the little power I have had these last half-dozen years.

However, I am not going to waste my little strength and paper upon such an unworthy subject, so I will just dismiss it by saying that I say a "*Gloria*" for every shade of relief from distress, as it comes, reckoning on nothing beyond the hour, and trying to be patient and ready for any future which it may please the blessed God to send.

We are just beginning to feel "homey" and comfortable in our house. . . . Already we both feel that since we left Newland we have had no such sense of "home," and no such accumulation of opportunities, spiritual and temporal, to make it. Here my dear wife has continual services within a few minutes of her door, and already a district of poor people which she has begun to visit. What a difference in her life this will make you can imagine, and what a happiness it is to me to see her so happy; indeed, her one and only drawback now is my wretched health, with its anxieties, which can never, I fear, be better.

11, The Paragon, Bath, December 9, 1881.

I hasten to send back what you ask for. Forgive my remissness, but I am no longer able to do, or think of, anything as I was wont. I cannot get my hand to write a word yet about Mr. Liddell, and my engagement has been already put off twice, and must now, at once, be fulfilled, *colte qui colte*.

The book has just come in! How perfect the "get up" is, with the edelweiss in the corner, I need not say.

Forgive my writing more, for I am very much done to-day, and the fog here is thick, and I cannot breathe freely.

He forced himself to the effort of writing a "Letter" for

the parishioners of St. Paul's, Knightbridge, on the resignation of his old and dear friend, the Rev. and Hon. Robert Liddell. There is no token in it of failing power, but it was only written by a dying effort; all through December his feebleness and difficulty of breathing increased, and the least exertion seemed to be too much for him.

The following prayers were found after his death amongst his papers:—

*Prayers against Sudden Death.*

Translated from the "Prodromus Eternitatis" of Drexelius.

I.

O most merciful Lord Jesus Christ, by Thy tears and agony and sweat of blood, by Thy precious life-giving death, from sudden and unprepared death, deliver me. Amen.

II.

O most gracious Lord Jesu, by Thy most bitter and shameful scourging and cruel crown of thorns, by Thy most tender Passion and outpouring of Thy boundless love, I most humbly beseech Thee, suffer me not, without the last sacraments, suddenly to pass away. Amen.

III.

O my most tenderly loving Lord Jesus Christ, my Saviour and my God, by all Thy sorrows and Thy pains, by Thy most precious blood and ever holy wounds, by Thy last cry upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" by Thy most strong appeal to the eternal Father, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," I beseech Thee, take me not from hence suddenly and unawares.

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me, cast me not out suddenly. Give me, I beseech Thee, space for repentance, and a happy departure in the full possession of Thy grace, that with all my being I may bless and praise Thee, through all eternity. Amen.

All together daily, or one at a time, as *ejaculations*. Never-

theless say, "Fiat voluntas Tua in omnibus, O Deus!" (see Wisdom iv. 7), and "In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in Æternum" (Ps. xxxi. 1).

But it pleased God that, like many of His servants who had been most constant in seeking Him at the altar, he should pass from earth without the Viaticum.

On Thursday, December 22, he went out as usual for an hour in a chair; it was a cold raw day, but he pined for air, and said it would refresh him. When he came in he seemed very ill, could eat no dinner, and got upstairs with much difficulty. That evening, at family prayers, he remained lying back in his chair instead of standing and kneeling, which he had never done before, while his wife read. Through the night he could not sleep, even for a moment; but when his doctor, who had not seen him for some weeks, came early on Friday morning, he did not seem to think him worse than usual, and said that one lung was doing its duty well. His wife was comforted, and read the morning service as usual to her beloved charge, and then he lay reading and meditating for more than an hour.

He wrote one last pencil note to a friend :

December 23.

Just one line of Christmas blessing to you and yours, my dearest —, from my bed of distress, where I am now confined, and have to gasp for breath all day and night, without rest or sleep or any sense of relief for ten minutes. Pray for me, that my *patience* may endure to the end, and that the blessed Jesus may sanctify my suffering to the honour of His name and my soul's good.

Will you thank the Archbishop for me, for sending me his very interesting (especially latter part) Charge?

I only wish he could have added some *constructive* little bit or

bits, to help those poor souls who are drifting away into the blank of doubt and misbelief.

But I can no more. God bless and keep you ever, prays  
Your most affectionate  
J. S.

His sufferings from racking cough and breathlessness were terrible, and the weather was the worst that could be, a dense fog, increasing the difficulty of breathing. Late in the afternoon he got up and lay on the sofa, partly dressed ; there was another bad night, but he slept a little. The proofs of his "Letter" came on Saturday, and he spent some time in revising them, but seemed very weary, and frequently laid them aside.

This was Christmas Eve, and through the wakeful suffering night he asked his wife to say the *Adeste Fideles*, and towards morning slept quietly, but woke in a startled, restless condition. After breakfast he revived, and became quite cheerful over the quantity of Christmas greetings brought by the post. He spent a long time in prayer and meditation, and then finished revising his proof, and gave it to his wife for the post. Mr. Dunn, the Incumbent of St. John Baptist's Church, called in the afternoon and arranged to come the following Friday to give him his Christmas Communion. He got up in the evening, and lay in his easy-chair, which he preferred to the sofa. "I went down to the drawing-room after dinner," his wife wrote, "and leaving the doors open I played *Adeste Fideles* as loud as I could, that a little bit of Christmas might reach him."

And so the time went by ; hard nights of weary struggle and suffering, in the day a little less distress, when he lay in his chair with his books, seeming to prefer reading



himself to being read to : at night his wife read psalms and hymns to him as he could bear them. In the afternoon of Wednesday, he asked for a pencil and wrote the following note, begging that it might be copied and sent to each one of a list of priests, which he also wrote :—

The Rev. James Skinner, to whom God is apparently bringing the end of long-continued sickness through some painful suffering, desires to have his name placed on the daily list of persons prayed for at the Celebration in your church, and begs you of your charity to add your own prayers.

One answer to this note must be given :

Christ Church, Oxford, December 29, 1881.

MY DEAR MRS. SKINNER,

I have, as your dear husband wished, asked three of the clergy here to remember him at the altar, and will, of course, remember him there and continually. I hope that, please God, he may yet do good service to Him on earth, and that what your natural anxiety fears may not be yet. But he has fought a good fight, and you will thank and bless God that, although in frail health during these last years, He has preserved him hitherto to you and to the Church. God bless you and him.

Yours affectionately,

E. B. PUSEY.

Give your dear husband my tender love.

That night, Wednesday, the 28th, after about ten o'clock, his cough and some other bad symptoms ceased entirely. His wife hoped this was a good sign, and that he would have a quiet night. Alas ! it was but the sign that the end was close at hand, and that the utterly exhausted frame had no longer any power to struggle ; from this moment he was actually dying, and nothing remained but for the bright and purified spirit to break through the frail, worn earthly

tabernacle, and find the longed-for rest. There was one more night of most distressing restlessness, and no sleep came : he asked his wife to read the seventy-seventh psalm, and when she had done so, he said, "Oh, how beautiful that is ! read it again."

"I call to remembrance my song." Those who in later years at Newland heard him sing alone the first few words of the *Venite* or *Magnificat*, before the choir joined in, can never forget the beauty of that song, or the reverent worship which it expressed. All through the night psalms and hymns were read to him, as he could bear it—he could not sing them yet.

When the doctor came on Thursday morning he saw that the end was approaching, but did not tell this to Mrs. Skinner. She sent a friend to be with her husband for a little, and to her he reproached himself for procrastination, saying that he had undertaken too much. "But what is time to me *now*," he added, "except to know more of the love and consolation and liberality and tenderness of God?" Then he murmured, "Pax. Rest. O God, have mercy!" and twice made the Sign of the Cross. The dew of death was on his forehead, yet he never thought he was dying ; roused himself by one last effort, and was settled in his chair by midday. Mr. Dunn called and had prayers with him ; he said that he knew he could not bear more than the shortest service at his Communion on the morrow, and gave minute directions as to what he wished to be done, speaking in a strong, earnest voice. Now also he expressed great regret at having left so many things unfinished, especially the "Synopsis." "That will never come out now," he said, and added, "Ah, the world will do

very well without it ; we think things so important and so necessary, but God knows what is most for His honour and glory." \*

When they were alone together, his wife said to him, "Dr. H——, I fear, thinks you much weaker to-day ;" for she had perceived this, and thought he ought to know it. He turned his head quickly, looked at her earnestly, and said in a rather surprised tone, "Does he ?" She could not speak ; he seemed to see in her face all that she would say, and after a little pause looked upwards, and said slowly, "This life has no attraction for me beyond yourself ; you are my only tie. My hope and firm trust is in my blessed, dearest Lord, Who loves me. Vile and unworthy as I am, I *know* how greatly He loves me, and in that love I place *all* my hope and confidence." He spoke in a feeble voice, and as if it were a difficulty to him to articulate, but his face shone with an expression of rapture.

His wife tried to say a few words of love, and of their blessed life together, but she could hardly speak. He turned again, looking earnestly and tenderly at her, and said, "Do not let us upset each other ; we *must* not upset each other."

He seemed faint and tired, but said that when he was rested she was to bring paper and pencil, and he would dictate a few last wishes. She left him for luncheon, little dreaming how near was the end ; when she returned he bade her bring a sheet of paper and write a letter for him ; then he dictated a note, asking about an address, and taking the pen from her hand signed it himself.

\* It was published in less than nine months. The fulfilment of his wishes, the last sacrifice required from him on earth, was given back to him, and in the way he would most have desired.

Then he seemed quite exhausted, closed his eyes, and lay still. Once again he looked at his wife, asked for a cordial, drank a little, and seemed revived, but disposed to sleep. She sat watching him as he slept quietly, his breathing so much less laboured than it had been that she hoped he would wake up refreshed, and, about 4 p.m., carried a book to the window, as the light was waning. She heard suddenly a slight, gentle sound, and was in an instant by his side. He lay as in the same calm sleep of the last hour; there was no trace of suffering, only the drops stood thick on his brow. She did not know, until her faithful servant told her, that the last bonds which held the spirit captive had been gently broken, and that the land of everlasting rest was won.

“When I wake up I am present with Thee.”

I am constantly by the side of that beloved and most lovely form (she wrote to a friend on January 3). It is not the *least* like a corpse. I have seen so many, but none like this. His face has lost all the look of weary pain it wore of late, his dear hands are crossed over his breast, and he does not now look more than his real age, sixty-three. He lies on a bed of Eucharis lilies and delicate ferns, and other lovely things; so many flowers have been sent that I hardly know what to do with them. O, when I come back and find *all gone*, what shall I do? But this I know, that my God, and his God, will never, never forsake me.

Once more she went to Newland with all that was mortal of him who had made the joy of that blessed home in past sunshine hours, and who had upheld her in their deep sorrow. His body was received by the clergy at Newland, and laid before the altar where he had begun the daily Eucharist, and Evensong was said. Far up on the

Malvern Hills the lights in Newland Church could be seen burning all night where watchers knelt in constant prayer ; some of the hours being kept by working men who had for years been voluntary members of the choir. There was a special choral Celebration at nine next morning, the Eve of the Epiphany, at which the mourners and others communicated, besides the usual eight o'clock Celebration. The church was brightly lit up, and beautiful with Christmas holly ; choicest white flowers on the altar, and entirely covering the pall beneath which lay the body of the first Warden of the almshouses.

It was borne out once more by the south door (through which he had been wont, many times a day, to go to and fro from his house to the church), into the quadrangle, and then through the great gate, past the village common, into the church by the chief entrance. " Now the labourer's task is o'er " was sung after the Lesson was read, and then, preceded by the choir, the old pensioners, and the long train of clergy, the coffin was for the last time taken from the church and carried to the lovely burial-ground. The last resting-place looked like a beautiful grotto rather than a grave, for it was entirely lined with evergreens, with chaplets of white *immortelles*, and bunches of choicest flowers. There they laid him, close by the grave of his only child, in the midst of all that he had loved best on earth, to rest till the day break and the shadows flee away.

---

It has been said, by one greatly honoured, that \* " it almost seems as if the members of CHRIST'S Body are to

\* See " The Power of Suffering," by the Bishop of Truro.

do yet more through their suffering, than through all their energizing ; as if—we would say it reverently—through the wounds of the members, as well as of the Head, life *is* to flow out. It seems as if, in some mysterious way, the great work that Christ had to accomplish, with all its mysterious influence on worlds unknown, as if the benefits of Christ's 'full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice,' could not be received by His Church till the wounds in *our* hands were so made, that healing could flow forth from them."

But it is an easier task to write of victory through courageous action than of that won by patient endurance, and the story told in these pages, not without difficulty, is meant for those who will read it with indulgent sympathy. And if, as may well be the case, it seem to any that the veil has been too rudely withdrawn from that which is dearest and most sacred, this, too, must be forgiven. For in this world of preparation for eternal joy, the purest and brightest happiness must needs often be succeeded by deepest anguish, and it may be that some sorrowing souls will be comforted and strengthened by a record of suffering borne with unshaken faith and hope, and with ever-deepening love for Him Who, having willed Himself to be perfect through suffering, chasteneth those whom He loveth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.

"Then let it be,—enduring for their sake,  
Hearts that are bleeding now, or once have bled,  
And which from hence some solace slight may take,  
That others, of such grief untouched, should say  
That here what better had been covered,  
Is bared unto the garish eye of day."

## APPENDIX.

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Since these pages passed through the press, I have seen my dear friend's will, dated August 13, 1867, and I think it well that some extracts from it should be given, as they seem to be especially characteristic, and to express that which, if he could speak, he would wish to make known.

T. T. CARTER.

October 12, 1883.

In the Name of the most holy and undivided Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: one Almighty and most merciful God. Amen.

I, James Skinner, priest of the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, in England, an unworthy sinner, considering that there is nothing more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the manner and hour thereof; hearing in my ears the voice of the Lord Jesus exhorting me to remember that I know not the day nor the hour of the "coming of the Son of man"—resolve and determine, while in fair health and strength, lest death come upon me suddenly and I be summoned away unprepared, to provide for the last, by the help of God's grace. And, therefore, I hereby declare the following to be my last will and testament.

I declare before God and the whole company of heaven that, as I have aimed, with many shortcomings, to live in the one

and only true faith of the most holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, as witnessed to the world before the division of East and West, so in the same I humbly desire to die, trusting to the help of Divine grace, without which I can do nothing. Wherefore, if, by assault of the devil or the violence of pain in disease, or the aberrations of a wandering mind, I shall, at any time, think or speak, or do anything contrary to the said most holy faith, I do now hereby already revoke it, and protest, in the presence of God, that I do not consent to any such thoughts or words or acts.

I protest and declare that, on the day of my death, I do long for and desire the blessed opportunity of making my humble confession and receiving the sentence of absolution from a priest, as a part of sincere and hearty penitence. Whereby, thro' the alone merits of Jesus Christ, I may be cleansed from every spot of sin, and my soul may be presented by Jesus in His own spotless Body, made spotless, to God. Wherefore, if opportunity shall be wanting, I declare this to be my will, and purpose and intention of my heart, to confess myself wholly and fully and purely to God. . . .

I protest and declare that, on the day of my death, I desire the most holy and blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ to be administered unto me, whereby I am joined on to Jesus Christ the Incarnate God, and find all refreshment and strength and safety and shelter in Him. Wherefore, if opportunity shall be wanting, I hereby declare that, at the least, I will spiritually to receive Jesus in this Sacrament; and I humbly beseech Him to save me from the enemy in that last hour of conflict and trial, and to assist and sustain and fight for me in the same.

. . . Whatever may be, in God's wisdom, the manner of my death, or wheresoever, I pray that the holy name of Jesus, and the thought of His kingdom of the redeemed, may be my last word and last thought. And therefore when words shall fail me, I do hereby protest and declare that I desire only to speak of Jesus Christ, and to think of His kingdom purchased for us; and



to praise Him, and to long for complete and perfect union with Him. Wherefore also I pray that the whole court of heaven above, and all faithful friends on earth, and all my beloved ones who may be near or around me, may pray and long thus on my behalf.



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